Fiesta hosts 8th Annual Man'amko Christmas Party. PAGE 2
Tinian, Rota kids get toys. PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXVII, Issue No. 255

www.saipantribune.com | WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 27, 2017 | www.facebook.com/saipantribune | 75¢

'Torres supported HR 339'

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

» HR 339's bar on construction workers 'never changed'
» Sablan says it's governor's prerogative to change his mind

Contrary to a statement that he did not support the intent of House Resolution 339, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) pointed out that Gov. Ralph DLG Torres did support the measure during deliberations by the U.S. Congress during the second quarter of 2017.

Sablan

Quoting Torres' testimony during the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on H.R. 339 last April 27, 2017, Sablan said in a statement that Torres backed the provision that bars construction workers from using the CW-1 program.

"Two years ago, I requested the

See TORRES on Page 4

Katherine Mersai, fourth from right, poses for a photo with her loved ones after receiving the Veterans of Foreign Wars 3475 Post Teacher of the Year award last Tuesday.
KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

Mersai bags VFW honor

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Katherine Mersai of William S. Reyes Elementary School took home the prestigious Teacher of the Year award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars 3475 Post, making her the first Commonwealth teacher who will represent the whole Asia-Pacific district in Washington, D.C.

Mersai's nomination will be submitted to the nation's capital to compete in VFW's national competition against six other regions.

Last Tuesday, Dec. 19, Mariano Fajardo, co-chairman of VFW's scholarship program, and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3475 commander Brad Ruszala presented Mersai with the award.

It is given to the teacher who continues to imbue in the minds of their students the importance of patriotism and the value of the nation's troops.

Mersai has been teaching for eight

See MERSAI on Page 4

New cargo planes take over Christmas Drop

A pair of Operation Christmas Drop bundles fall toward an isolated Micronesian island, Dec. 13, 2017.
DAVID OWSIANKA/U.S. AIR FORCE

By LEON COOK
STARS AND STRIPES

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan— New technology on Super Hercules transport planes has helped crews airdrop Christmas gifts to Pacific islanders with pinpoint accuracy.

The C-130Js, which recently replaced the 374th Airlift Wing's fleet of older C-130H models at Yokota in western Tokyo, flew out of Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, this month during Operation Christmas Drop.

The operation, which has delivered much-needed supplies to isolated islands each December since 1952, was particularly on point this year.

"The avionics suite that we have on board definitely allows us to analyze our drop zone very carefully,

See CARGO on Page 4

$15M set aside for PSS

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives Ways & Means Committee has set aside $15 million from the supplemental budget for the Public School System, in compliance with the constitutional mandate that 25 percent of general funds must go to PSS.

According to committee chair Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan), the $15 million was at the request of the Board of Education, but the Department of Finance already initially released $12 million to meet the immediate needs of PSS.

See PSS on Page 4

INSIDE

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North Korea said it is a "pipe dream" for the U.S. to think it will give up its nukes.
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A hot tip could still earn you a cool $10 million from a Boston museum.
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Local

Fiesta hosts 8th Annual *Man'amko* Christmas Party

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan hosted a Christmas party for the *man'amko* last Thursday, the eighth time it has done so, this time with over 70 senior citizens attending.

"We recognize that the *man'amko* play a very important role in our community," said Fiesta Resort general manager Wendi Herring. "Your vision, your work, your wisdom, and your contributions paved the way for all of us,"

Herring said that Fiesta has given back to the community in more ways than one throughout the year and it would negligent on its part if it were to miss the chance to give back to the senior citizens.

Herring also said that seeing *man'amko* last Thursday made her appreciate the importance of living. "Looking at all of you today reminds all of us that it's not the years in your life that counts; it's the life in your years," she said.

Office on Aging director Walter Manglona is thankful that Fiesta continues to host this event for the *man'amko* because it means a lot to them and makes them feel special.

"Walking around and seeing everybody with such big smiles is amazing," he said.

Office on Aging congregant Angie Wheat said Fiesta goes out of its way to make her feel special because the chefs of the resort prepared dishes that were both nutritious for her and her fellow *man'amko*, and would not upset her sensitive stomach.

Manglona also wanted to especially thank Chelu Photos because they set up a photo booth for the *man'amko*—a first.

Chelu Photos took unlimited pictures for free, so the elderly would have souvenirs.

Manglona said when he spoke with Chelu Photos owner Sylvan Tudela about the *man'amko* Christmas party; Tudela immediately was on board.

Fiesta's department heads served the *man'amko* all that they needed and even partook in the *man'amko* dances and activities.

The resort even gave out a few raffle prizes.

Christmas time is season for giving, and Saipan Vegas, the best gaming club in Saipan, is proud to announce great Christmas Player Promotions.
Fabulous
SAIPAN VEGAS
Saipan Vegas, player mystery Christmas Stocking Draw.
Every day for the month of December with over $15,000 in Cash and free play promo tickets including two $5,000 cash prizes, to be won by lucky Vegas Players.
Just pick a stocking and you could be a big winner! (See Venue for details)
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Our top level jackpots is being increased from $10,000 to $15,000 for the month of December!
Come in today for some fun and the chance for a big cash prize!
Good Luck and Merry Christmas from Saipan Vegas!
Location: Middle Road (next to McDonald's) • 24 hours a day • 7 days a week

Franken Brau: Neighborhood beer hub

BEA CABRERA

"The local community is starting to experience craft beer. They start with something light and slowly transition to other flavors. Now people are coming in, asking for recommendations," said Franken Brau president and co-founder Bruno Doetsch.

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Located in San Antonio, Franken Brau is the best source of craft beer and the only neighborhood craft beer hub on Saipan.

The business got started 18 months ago after a friend's brief visit to Saipan.

"I was based on Colorado and a friend of mine came here (Saipan) for a business trip. He came back to Colorado and shared tales of the need for good beer on island.

See FRANKEN on Page 4

Tourism Topics
A bi-weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.
The Marianas
| Saipan | Tinian | Rota |
HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY

What More Do Our Visitors Want to Experience?

Let's find out more about our visitors, based on one of the Marianas Visitors Authority's latest visitor exit surveys. Here's what visitors shared with us before their departure from The Marianas:

#1 Most Wanted Potential Attraction

The most wanted potential attraction for The Marianas overall was the open market/night market (38%). The weekly Garapan Street Market is an excellent example of this, and many tour operators already offer the street market as part of their packages. Visitors want to be able to enjoy this kind of event on other nights of the week, as well.

Other Potential Attractions

Korean visitors were most likely to want activities for children and families (32%). Chinese visitors wanted more local food (41%). Japanese visitors, however, preferred more shopping attractions (33%). Also high on the list for all markets were Marine/Sea Life Exhibit (26%) and Nature/Scenic Attractions (24%).

Upcoming Events

- **Christmas in The Marianas**
  Dec. 30, 2017
  5-9 p.m., Paseo de Marianas
  Featuring the Mochitsuki Festival and Live Entertainment
- **Tinian Hot Pepper Festival**
  Feb. 17-18, 2018
- **Saipan Marathon 2018**
  March 10, 2018

1976-2016 40 years
www.mymarianas.com

DPS implements Designated Driver Program

In anticipation of the various celebrations welcoming the New Year, the Department of Public Safety is implementing the "Designated Driver Program" starting Dec. 29, 2017, to Jan. 1, 2018, where you can be picked up by a DPS designated driver for free.

The aim of the program is to encourage each individual to not to go behind the wheel after a night of drinking.

The Designated Driver Program hotlines are 287-7433 and 483-7433. You can call for a free ride on Dec. 29 and Dec. 31 from 10pm to 5am. The program is also available on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1 from 10pm to 2am.

No major accidents or incidents were reported during the CNMI Christmas weekend, when residents have died in situations caused by impaired drivers in years past.

Keeping the public safe is the sole priority of DPS. First, always drink responsibly and assign a designated driver. Second, the words "I am just tipsy and not drunk" is not an excuse. Tipsy driving is drunk driving. Third and the most effective prevention is not to drink and drive.

DPS hopes the safe holidays would extend through the New Year weekend. ***(Bea Cabrera)***

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LOTTERY

PACIFIC GOLD

RESULTS

Draw # 3801 Draw Date 12/23/2017

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Call +1 (670) 322-1234 to make your reservation today!

Set Menu A
Norwegian Smoked Salmon with Trio of Citrus Flesh, Caper Berries, & Red Onion
Beef Consomme with Vegetables Brunoise & Herb Pancake
Fresh Strawberries & Baby Spinach in a Parmesan cup, with Roquefort Cheese, Roasted Pecans, & Creamy Balsamic Dressing
Orange, Mango, and Ginger Sorbet
Maine Lobster in Roasted Garlic-Kalamata Olive Crust, Orange Butter Glaze Haricot Verts, Carrots, New Potatoes
Ube Cheesecake with Strawberry & Mango Coulis
Siphon Coffee or Tea
$85.00 per person (+10% service charge)

Set Menu B
Norwegian Smoked Salmon with Trio of Citrus Flesh, Caper Berries, & Red Onion
Beef Consomme with Vegetables Brunoise & Herb Pancake
Fresh Strawberries & Baby Spinach in a Parmesan cup, with Roquefort Cheese, Roasted Pecans, & Creamy Balsamic Dressing
Orange, Mango, and Ginger Sorbet
Roast Black Mountain Prime Rib with Garlic Herb Crust & Chestnut-Mushroom Gravy, Haricot Verts, Carrots, New Potatoes
Ube Cheesecake with Strawberry & Mango Coulis
Siphon Coffee or Tea
$85.00 per person (+10% service charge)

APC
AQUA RESORT CLUB
Saipan

CARGO

From Page 1

making sure that we're delivering those bundles not only in an ideal location for recovery by the islanders, but also a safe location," Capt. Brian Dendy, one of the Yokota-based pilots who flew Christmas Drops missions this year, said in an Air Force statement.

Lt. Gen. Jerry Martinez, U.S. Forces Japan commander, has described the C-130J as the "meanest, toughest, and most tactical machine in the world." It flies with two fewer crew members than its predecessor and has improved avionics, increased cargo capacity, improved fuel economy and a longer range.

Christmas drops this year involved U.S., Japanese and Australian airmen delivering more than 140 crates of supplies, each weighing about 400 lbs, to 56 islands in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Republic of Palau.

Master Sgt. Josh McMahan, 36th Airlift Squadron loadmaster, performs a visual inspection of a C-130J Super Hercules prior to taking off for a training sortie during the 66th Operation Christmas Drop at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, Dec. 14, 2017.
DAVID OWSIANKA/U.S. AIR FORCE

The bundles contained items such as fishing nets, construction materials, powdered milk, canned goods, rice, coolers, clothing, shoes, school supplies, and, of course, Christmas toys.

Andy Nepaial, 58, who grew up on the tiny, now-uninhabited island of Agrigan—also known as Agrihan—in the Northern Marianas, has fond childhood memories of the Christmas drops.

"When the airplanes were rumbling over the island, the whole island was shaking like it was going to crack in two," he told *Stars and Stripes* on Thursday.

Nepaial vividly remembers watching the planes drop smoke grenades to gauge wind conditions in the drop zone—calculations now performed via the sophisticated electronics suite in the C-130J.

"We saw these things coming out of the back of the airplane and I was yelling: 'There are toys coming down,'" Nepaial said of the first Christmas drop mission to Agrigan in the 1960s.

Larry Raigetal, who lived on Lamotrek in Micronesia until he was 14, recalled in a video posted online by the Air Force, how children raced to get to the bundles.

"Whoever gets to the box first gets to get the parachutes," he said, explaining they made excellent mosquito nets. "Our priority mission was to try and get to the box as quickly as we can and just cut a string off the parachute, then it would be ours."

Raigetal said kids would see toys they wanted in the boxes but knew better than to fight over them.

"We have elders who know how to divide up those gifts, so if you're lucky you get to get what you want," he said. "I was always excited for Christmas droppings."

The supplies air-dropped to the islanders are collected throughout the year by the Christmas Drop Organization, a nonprofit based in Guam, and with the support of local businesses and community organizations.

PSS

From Page 1

"When they [BOE] submitted their listing, there was a total of $15 million but they came forward stating that their immediate need and highest priority amounted to $12 million. So we reached that understanding and I informed them because this is the first BGRT [business gross revenue tax] for fiscal year 2017," he said.

"We are expecting more collection and supplemental revenues throughout the fiscal year and so we would deliver their remaining $3 million in the next round," he added.

Demapan said his priority is to meet the list that BOE provided the committee.

"We wanted to make sure before we close out this year that we make good on our word to give them the $12 million for their need. Next round is whenever the governor decides to identify additional revenues. There are couple of months that are being audited [and] collections are still coming in so once that is finalized and we will be able to do it," he said

BOE board member Herman Guerrero said that $15 million is the base, but it does not mean it should stop there.

"You need to look at it in terms of what are the needs of the schools and of the children so you can improve student learning and provide a good education," he said.

"Sometimes, legislators think that's all we are entitled to. If anything, the base is there to guarantee funding PSS of not less than 25 percent, but they can always give us more. They are always very reluctant to do that," he added.

Guerrero said that PSS is provided funding under the CNMI Constitution and BOE is dependent on that.

"Schools in the [United] States are normally funded through property taxes so all the property taxes collected is exclusively for education. But the thing is, we don't have property taxes over here and they even prohibit coming up with property taxes here unless people approve it," he said.

"So we need to get funding for education somewhere else and that is the reason why the only source of funding the government have is through the revenues that the government collects or portions of it. They need to look at a bigger perspective on how funding is done somewhere else in the [United] States," he added.

Guerrero believes that PSS funding should not be delayed since education is a critical.

"His [governor's] hands are not tied and he can do a lot of things," he added

Guerrero said that the BOE still has the certified question as a legal remedy in the event the Supreme Court's decision is needed to clarify how the constitution should be interpreted in terms of determining the budget of PSS.

FRANKEN

From Page 2

We did our research, looked at the beer offerings here in the CNMI and we decided to give it a try," said Franken Brau president and co-founder Dr. Bruno Doetsch.

"With a population of 55,000, the CNMI is not a big market but the potential is definitely here as we get 650,000 tourists per year. So we don't have a big market but we have a market and therefore a niche," he added.

Franken Brau takes the beer business seriously. They aspire to bring craft beer from the mainland fresh for consumption on island—from brew to Brau.

"It is a process and we do it. We ship our beer in a refill container to maintain quality. We ship beers from the breweries via refrigerated truck to the port in Long Island then loaded to a refill container. It is then shipped here and once here, we store it in a cold room at a temperature of 38," Doetsch said.

Franken Brau opened its doors to introduce another perspective on beer consumption.

"Drinking craft beer is more like a lifestyle. It is not just drinking beer, it is about enjoying beer and this is how the craft beer movement has been revived. We want that lifestyle here on Saipan and as we go along, we see the movement starting because people enjoy our beer," Doetsch said.

"The local community is starting to experience craft beer. They start with something light and slowly transition to other flavors. Now, people are coming in asking for recommendations. They want to drink quality and I think it's better to have five bottles of good beer instead of a case of a bad one," Doetsch added.

Environmental consultant and musician Jason Wakeham, a craft beer customer, said the craft beer lifestyle is where one decides that quality is more important than quantity.

"If you are a volume person, a pack of regular beer is a good deal for $10 to $12 but nobody tells you what they put in that beer. But if you care about quality and natural ingredients and get it from trusted craft brews from the mainland, you are in a better position," he said.

"I want to drink beer that tastes good, fresh, delicious and cold, which is important and Bruno is on top of that because he makes sure that his beers stays cold all the way from the brewery to Saipan. He cares about beer and is not here to make a quick buck off of people," he added.

Amber Weston, from Portland, Oregon who grew up drinking craft beer, is glad that the island is opening up to new tastes and flavor.

"Craft beer consumption is both a culture and a mentality. If beer is shipped and stored properly than you get your money's worth," she said.

Doetsch said the market's taste for beer is evolving and paving the way for local breweries to open business on island.

"It makes me happy that we have Saipan Brewery who is brewing locally, changing the future of beer in the CNMI. But our mission is a different one as we get beer made in USA, we do less canning, and we do wholesale business," he said.

"People have been coming back—locals and tourists. It's tough to convince someone to switch from a case of canned beer to try craft beers we bring on island. Expats, they come anyway but the recognition we get from the local people is something else," he added.

TORRES

From Page 1

U.S. [Citizenship] and Immigration Services to review the issuance of CW permits to individuals in the construction trades. In my view, CW permits were only for job categories not available under existing visa classifications, and that construction workers could be sourced through H-2B visas," Torres wrote in his written testimony.

"As we look back at the CW permits issued in the last two years, it is evident that a large majority of the new permits that have led to the shortage have been in the construction trades. Removing construction workers from the eligible job categories for the CW permit will force employers to go to better suited visa classifications and alleviate the limited CW permits for occupations that are crucial for the overall economy and the needs of the people," he added.

Last week, Torres told *Saipan Tribune* that the repercussions of H.R. 339 were something that he did not support. He added that the outcome of enacting HR 339 into law was "devastating to everybody here on the island."

Torres issued the statement after *Saipan Tribune* requested for comments on USCIS' decision to classify general maintenance workers as construction occupations.

In a separate statement over the holidays, Sablan clarified that Torres was in support of the provision that barred construction workers from the CW-1 program "…at the time and without reservation."

"H.R. 339's bar on the use of CW permits for new construction workers never changed from introduction of the bill to the day President Trump signed it into law. Moreover, that same language is reflected in draft legislation that [the Northern Marianas Business Alliance Corp.] began circulating in June this year," said Sablan.

"For the record, I believe he was absolutely correct in advocating then for employers of construction workers to use H-2B visas and not the limited CW permits that so many of our other local businesses rely on," he said, adding that the governor also went public in urging construction companies to switch to H-2B visas "even before the [U.S.] Senate hearing."

According to Sablan, though it was the "governor's prerogative to change his mind," U.S. Congress' view of the situation is crucial to the overall fate of the CW-1 program.

"I will note that the members of Congress to whom the governor testified—under oath—in support of this law are the same members of Congress that I am working with now to make sure we have enough workers in our economy. We need their help. And if these members of Congress believe that the word of the governor of the Marianas cannot be trusted, they may be much less willing to listen to what he says the Marianas needs," he said.

MERSAI

From Page 1

years at WSR and currently teaches the second grade.

She said she was not expecting to be nominated, let alone win the plum for the entire Asia Pacific district. She expressed shock at finding out that she had been nominated out of the many teachers on Saipan because she was just passionate about her students learning the importance of veterans.

"I am so humbled to win this…I wasn't expecting this… it is such an honor," she said.

Mersai said she advocates for community service and even initiates ways to perform community service with her students.

She takes her students on field trips to visit the American Memorial Park in remembrance of the veterans who died for the country.

"I do a lot of community service and I plan a lot of field trips for the students. My grade level team actually also plan and make sure we go to the American Memorial Park to see the veterans," she said. "I didn't think it would make a difference but it actually makes the kids more appreciative of what they have today,"

"I see a big difference because kids these days tend to rely on electronics and they forget sometimes what they need to do to make themselves better citizens so I have really pushed for that," she added.

Awards were also distributed to the winners of the Voice of Democracy, a speaking contest, and the Patriot's Pen competition, a writing contest.

For the Voice of Democracy, Kelvin Wolfe of Marianas High School placed first and was awarded $150. Victoria Dela Cruz, also from MHS, placed second and was awarded $100. There were only two qualifying entries for the VOD.

For the Patriot's Pen, Danahlei Rodriguez from ChaCha Oceanview Middle School placed first and was awarded $150. Mylan Goodwin from Saipan International School placed second and was awarded $100. Matthew Berline, also from SIS, placed third and was awarded $75.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Military training at Warning Area 517

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on Dec. 27-29, from 8am to 5pm. It is recommended the general public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories. W-517 is activated south of latitude 12° 40' 00"N. Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Banks are open for public use. W-517 begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. ***(PR)***

Business hours for the CNMI Judiciary

■ Dec. 29 for Saipan, Rota, Tinian: Open from 7:30am to 11:30am. Closed from 11:31am to 4:30pm.

■ Jan. 1, 2018, New Year's Day: Saipan, Rota, Tinian will be closed.

■ Jan. 2, 2018: Saipan, Rota, Tinian hours will be limited. Essential services in the Offices of the Clerk of the Superior Court, Office of Adult Probation, Family Court Division, Drug Court Division, Marshal Services Division, Superior Court Judicial Chambers, and the Administrative Services Unit (cashier) will be provided.

The Supreme Court, Law Revision Commission, Commonwealth Recorder's Office, and Judiciary Administrative Office will be closed.

For more information or assistance, contact Deanna M. Ogo at the CNMI Supreme Court at (670) 236-9715 or email: deanna.manglona@justice.gov.mp or call Patrick V. Diaz at the CNMI Superior Court at 236-9765 or email: patrick.diaz@justice.gov.mp.***(PR)***

Distribution of 2017 W2-CM and annual reconciliation forms

The Division of Revenue and Taxation, Department of Finance began distributing the 2017 W2-CM and Annual Reconciliation forms and instructions last Friday, Dec. 22, 2017.

Businesses, employers, and all payroll service providers are encouraged to reserve forms needed by calling the Administration Office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation at 664-1000, 664-1098 or via fax at 664-1015.

Forms will be available for pick-up from the Compliance Branch or main office located in the Joeten Dandan Building.

Employers are also reminded that forms are required to be filed at Revenue and Taxation by Feb. 28, 2018. ***(PR)***

JKPL offers ukulele classes anew

Registration for Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's Beginner and Advance Ukulele Class is now open. The minimum age requirement is ages 8 years or older and adults. The total cost for eight class sessions is $50.

Ukulele classes are held at Joeten-Kiyu Public Library in partnership with ukulele instructor Larry Lee and son, Kui Lee. The deadline to register is Saturday, Jan. 6, 2018.

The JKPL ukulele class is based on "First come; first paid." Students must provide their own ukuleles and a folder to hold music sheets (plastic sheet protectors and a three-ring binder are recommended). Parents/guardians must sign a liability waiver form on behalf of their participating children and must adhere to public library policies and procedures. For questions regarding beginner and advanced ukulele class, call Celina Foreman or Victoria Cabrera at 235-7315 / 7322 during regular library hours. ***(PR)***

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Dispatcher

The successful candidate will be responsible for coordinating the efficient delivery of products with the Supply and Distribution team to customers, and ensuring effective and excellent customer service. Applicants must have at least 2 years successful work experience in a customer service-related position; excellent organizational skills; the ability to operate basic office machines; and intermediate to advance computer proficiency. Previous experience in a petroleum-related environment a plus. Successful candidate shall have the ability to perform other duties as assigned, able to work on weekend, holidays, and late hours if required.

Interested individuals who meet the above requirements should submit their resume no later than Tuesday, January 2, 2018.

Electrician/Technician

This position is responsible for the installation, maintenance, and repair of all IP&E retail assets. Ideal candidates should have a technical degree in electrical, mechanical, or automobile repair and maintenance or any other similar discipline with 2-3 years of work experience in the respective field. The successful candidate will be highly motivated; excellent written, verbal, and organizational skills; strong work ethic; and the ability to work independently as well as a positive team player. Travel may be required.

Interested individuals who meet the above requirements should submit their resume no later than Tuesday, January 8, 2018.

Resumes may be submitted to the attention of IP&E Human Resources Department.

Office : Corner Puetto St. and Industrial Drive Commercial Port Saipan, MP 96950
Email : HumanResourceTeam@ipehq.com
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Tinian Youth Center display toys for children to choose moments later. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig, Star Marianas Air president Shaun Christian, Lt. Col. Marcus Reynolds, and Aubry M. Hocog special assistant for Programs and Grants, display toys delivered to Rota. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Star Marianas Air president Shaun Christian, middle, stands with Marines from Marine Corps Activity Guam with some of the hundreds of toys he delivered from Guam to Tinian.

Tinian, Rota kids get toys

Thanks to the generosity of Star Marianas Air and the collective efforts of the Tinian and Rota mayors' offices, hundreds of new toys from the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves' Toys for Tots Program were delivered to Tinian on Dec. 20 and to Rota on Dec. 21.

Star Marianas Air president Shaun Christian took time to fly the toys from Guam to Tinian on Wednesday and then again from Guam to Rota the following day.

"I've been interested in this program since I was a boy when I was in a Toys for Tots commercial. It feels like I'm Santa's helper today," he said.

On Tinian, members of the Tinian Youth Center and the mayor's office were on hand to collect the toys at the airport, organize them at the Teen Youth Center, and display them for children to choose.

"You can see that TYC put a lot of work into putting this together for the community," said Gunnery Sgt. Donald McClester, Toys for Tots coordinator for the CNMI. "But it's the smiles on the kids' faces that make everything worth it."

On Rota, hundreds of toys were also made available to boys and girls thanks to the coordination between the Rota Mayor's Office, Star Marianas Air, and the U.S. Marines.

"Toys for Tots has been on Guam for nine years and thanks to the community leadership on Tinian, we delivered there for three years now, but this is the first time we have been able to get to Rota," said Capt. Nathan Adams, Guam's Toys for Tots coordinator.

Due in large part to the Guam Chamber of Commerce, the Toys for Tots Program has gained the support of dozens of area retailers, architectural firms, Guam public schools, real estate firms, automobile dealers, banks, restaurants, civic organizations and numerous members of the general public. The donated dolls, games, sports equipment, books, and stocking stuffers were collected on Guam from Oct. 1 to Dec. 14.

Adams expressed his appreciation to the people and organizations who volunteered to make this year's campaign an outstanding success. "The generous support of our community makes the Toys for Tots program one of the most successful community events in the area."

To see some of the individual contributors to this year's campaign visit the Marine Corps Activity Guam Facebook site at https://www.facebook.com/USMCGuam. ***(PR)***

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Interior funds health program for four RMI communities

WASHINGTON—U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke has directed the Office of Insular Affairs to authorize a partial funding amount of $721,320, to the Ministry of Health in the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the Four Atoll Health Care Program for the people of Bikini, Enewetak, Rongelap, and Utrok. Zinke is concerned about the threat to the continuity of services under this program.

"The Marshall Islands played an important role in American and world history, and remains a key component of our military readiness in the Pacific," said Zinke. "Looking after the health and wellness of our extended American family is a key component of upholding commitments to one another."

"We look to Congress to help us meet these important commitments on behalf of the U.S. government for the people of Bikini, Enewetak, Rongelap, and Utrok" said Assistant Secretary Douglas Domenech.

Originally funded under the first Compact of Free Association, these services are now provided through the discretionary technical assistance program and require congressional authorization and appropriation every year.

Through the program, healthcare services and overall wellness programs are provided for over 18,000 people from the four nuclear-affected atolls in the Marshall Islands.

The program covers dental services, women's health and cancer screening, diabetes screening and control, eye services in collaboration with the Canvas Back Eye Mission, immunization coverage, reduction of infant mortality, and surveillance of tuberculosis and leprosy.

The total requested for fiscal year 18 is $1.4 million.

The program provides basic health services for people from the four atolls in the Marshall Islands impacted by the nuclear weapons testing program which the U.S. Department of Defense carried out in the Marshall Islands between 1946 and 1958. ***(PR)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

No matter how many birthdays come and go, you'll always be our little boy… our greatest pride and joy! Belated happy 18th birthday, Arron (Dec. 25, 2017)! Wishing you good health, success, and happiness always. We love you! Greetings come from Mom, Dad, and your entire family.

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Color: White
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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-17-038, Rev. 1

Electric Power Pole Mitigation Project

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms to perform mitigation of the CUC power distribution system through the replacement of 374 wood poles to concrete poles in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project entails the replacement of 103 units of 35-foot and 271 units of 40-foot wood poles to concrete poles and the assembly of electrical hardware. The work site is to take place across CUC's power grid.

This project is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from the CUC and FEMA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **171 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-IFB-17-038, Rev. 1, Electric Power Pole Mitigation Project",** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 12, 2018** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement the form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. *A Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). ***Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.***

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered Prospective Bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 29, 2017** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Purchasing Officer- via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Adrian Reyes, CUC Power Jr. Electrical Engineer – via email address adrian.reyes@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Assistant-via email address marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid documents, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN, JR.
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-18-004

SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF POWER DISTRIBUTION ANNUAL MATERIALS
(Revised December 13, 2017)

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified vendors for the Supply and Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials for Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

CUC may award a contract to more than one firm for the materials, based on bids for "Commodity Groups".

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-18-004, Supply & Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials, Saipan, CNMI" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on January 26, 2018,** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. *A copy of the entire submission is also required to be sent via email to CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.*

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety.

Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7).

Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders shall comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract(s) is contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Board of Director's approval. The contract(s) will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on January 10, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Marcela Tenorio, CUC Purchasing Technician via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org; Joseph Crisostimo, CUC Power Division, Purchasing Technician via email joseph.crisostimo@cucgov.org; and Alfred Palattao, CUC Power Division, Engineer via email alfred.palattao@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Rota students walk the tourism talk with MTEC

The Marianas Tourism Education Council saw its annual school tourism educational outreach message "Tourism is Everybody's Business" in action during a recent visit to Rota.

MTEC board member Catherine Perry and Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects specialist Demalyn Pagarao spoke to students of Dr. Rita H. Inos Junior & Senior High on Nov. 17, 2017, and noted that several of the students were also supporting the Rota Blue Triathlon the following day.

Members of the school MY WAVE (Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically) Club, Tourism Class, and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp. were on hand during the triathlon to cheer on participants, and some were part of the island dance group that entertained triathletes at the awards dinner that evening.

MTEC also presented to fifth graders at Sinapalo Elementary School, where students discussed what they feel makes Rota unique as a destination.

"Although tourism activity [on] Rota are lower than Saipan, the students [on] Rota already have a grasp of some key tourism fundamentals, especially hospitality," said Perry. "Sinapalo Elementary has a huge sign in their cafeteria that reminds students about the value of helpfulness, which we encouraged them to extend to visitors by being friendly. In the junior/senior high, we challenged them to come up with a realistic consumer promotion for Rota, and they recommended for the municipality to subsidize some flights during summer vacation, targeting military families in Guam. It's a strategic, achievable idea to help spur tourism in their island."

MTEC is presenting to fifth, eighth, and tenth graders this year on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in partnership with MVA. The presentations are also sponsored by the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, Kanoa Resort, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Ernst & Young, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, and T Galleria.

Schools interested in having an MTEC presentation may contact Pagarao at dpagarao@mymarianas.com or 664-3219. ***(MVA)***

On Nov. 17, 2017, Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects specialist Demalyn Pagarao teaches fifth graders at Sinapalo Elementary about the duties and activities of the tourism office. MVA

Students of Dr. Rita H. Inos Junior & Senior High pose for a group photo at the Marianas Tourism Education Council's presentation at the school on Nov. 17, 2017. MVA

MY WAVE club members and other students of Dr. Rita H. Inos Junior & Senior High prepare to perform at the awards banquet of the Rota Blue Triathlon on Nov. 18, 2017. MVA

Marianas Tourism Education Council board member Catherine Perry, rear left, and Marianas Visitors Authority Community Projects specialist Demalyn Pagarao, far right, teach fifth graders at Sinapalo Elementary about tourism backpacks during the MTEC presentation at the school on Nov. 17, 2017. MVA

Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Community Guidance Center

BLUE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

"One Day at a Time"

A MESSAGE OF HOPE & WELLNESS FOR THE HOLIDAYS

At any time of the year, and especially during the holidays, people can get struck with depression. While feeling sad is normal, persistent feelings of sadness and a loss of interest in doing things once enjoyed may be a sign of a more serious problem. Depression is a common medical illness that can negatively affect a person's thoughts, feelings and behavior. This mood disorder which ranges from mild to serious can be treated, unfortunately some people choose destructive ways to cope; some use alcohol or drugs, others become socially isolated, and sadly some have even taken their life. It is critical that people get the help they need to lift out of a depressive state. If you or someone you know is feeling depressed and hopeless, reach out to a professional.

There are ways to support someone you care about who is dealing with depression. Here's a list of some things you can do to start the process of hope and recovery:

1. Learn about the Condition
Reading up on the illness will help you feel more in control of the situation and give you more patience to tolerate the confusing or frustrating symptoms.

2. Help Them Identify and Cope With Sources of Stress
Stress contributes to depression and also interrupts healthy coping strategies. Help them identify sources of stress and ways to reduce it. Small changes, like deep breathing techniques or taking short walks, can go far in reversing the effects of stress.

3. Remind them of their Strengths
Remind them of their strengths, using examples of a time in their lives they showed courage, compassion, integrity, and overcame challenges.

4. Laughter Heals
Laughter soothes and triggers the release of "feel good" brain chemicals to increase one's ability to reduce stress.

5. Let them know that this too will pass
It is a simple statement of truth that holds the most powerful healing element of all: hope.

6. Listen, Listen, Listen. And Listen.
A basic and powerful way to connect with others is to listen from the heart. Allow them to talk and express how they feel without interruptions or judgment. It's better to say nothing and just listen warmly than to say the wrong things. For example, Do say, "I am here for you." Don't say, "Others have it worse than you." Do say, "You matter to me." Don't say, "Life isn't fair."

7. If they are suicidal, do not leave them alone
Do not leave him or her alone if they are depressed and feeling suicidal or having thoughts of harming themselves. Having someone around is important. Bring your loved one to a professional for an evaluation if you fear they would hurt themselves or others.

8. Eat and Sleep Well. Get physical.
Basic nutrients and a good healthy diet is important when feeling depressed as there is a tendency to skip meals or lose appetite. Incorporate enough physical activity, however big or small. Physical activity combats depression.

9. Small acts of kindness can go a long way
A gesture to let them know you care can go a long way, like share a favorite dish or fresh fruits, call to say hello, or offer to take him or her out to a movie or dinner. Kind words to let them know you love them and that they matter can go a long way.

RECOVERY CLINIC SERVICES

The Community Guidance Center's Recovery Clinic, a substance use disorder treatment program, offers services to support individuals and families affected with substance use disorders with essential information and coping skills to pursue health, wellness, and recovery. On October 31, 2017 the Recovery Clinic launched Intensive Outpatient (IOP) Treatment Services for individuals affected by moderate to severe substance abuse disorder. Through the Matrix Model, participants and their families are provided structured, evidenced-based treatment for 16 weeks and 36 weeks of continuing care. Alongside the Matrix Model, CGC offers peer support and 12 Step facilitation which builds and empowers participants and their families in the ongoing recovery process. Other coordinated groups to compliment and support treatment include exercise and physical activities, arts and culture, and a spiritual component. If you are or know of someone who is struggling with substance use issues, please contact our office for more information.

DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 13	Completion of the NAADAC Foundations of Addiction Practice Training (80 Hrs)
December 15	Blue Fridays: Wear Your Blue Island Wear to support the Blue Ribbon Campaign KKMP Recovery Show 7:30am-8:30am
December 16	NSA Safe & Sober Christmas Youth Softball Tournament (Prevention Unit) Prevention Unit at Christmas in the Marianas
December 19	Health Walk (TLC) 5:00PM Registration - Starting at 5:30PM Oleai Pavillion
December 22	Blue Fridays: Wear Your Blue Island Wear to support the Blue Ribbon Campaign KKMP Recovery Show 7:30AM-8:30AM
December 23	Prevention Unit at Christmas in the Marianas
December 27	Recovery Clinic in partnership with DYS: Village Community Forum at Kagman Community Center. 6:00pm - 7:00pm
December 29	Blue Fridays: Wear Your Blue Island Wear to support the Blue Ribbon Campaign KKMP Recovery Show 7:30am - 8:30am
December 30	Prevention Unit at Christmas in the Marianas

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation: Community Guidance Center, express warmest thoughts and best wishes for the holidays. May peace, love and prosperity be with our families throughout the CNMI.

For more information, please call Community Guidance Center at 323-6560/61

Substance Abuse Prevention Services Unit	Recovery Clinic	Transitional Living Center (TLC)	Systems of Care (SOC)	Wellness Clinic
(670) 323-6560/61	(670) 323-6560/61	(670) 323-4060/63	(670) 664-4604/05 to 09	(670) 236-8752

CGC-Prevention Services Unit cgc_prevention cgc_prevention

This message is brought to you by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration in partnership with the CHCC:CGC - Substance Abuse Prevention Services Unit.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXVII, Issue No. 255

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Japan's Olympics-size challenge: Ban smoking

If you work in an office with smokers, you know that they tend to disappear at regular intervals. No mystery where they are: Shivering, sweltering or just lolling on the sidewalk, puffing away.

This may strike you as pathetic. Or it may stir concerns for their health. Or you may wonder, while they're out there, who's doing all the work? The answer, some Japanese marketing firm employees concluded, was: Not the smokers. Everyone else.

Nonsmokers at the Japanese company, Piala, protested that smokers stepped away from their desks repeatedly but still left at the same time at night as the non-smokers did.

So Piala's chief executive devised an ingenious incentive: People who did not smoke would be rewarded with up to six additional vacation days a year.

"I hope to encourage employees to quit smoking through incentives rather than penalties or coercion," Takao Asuka, the company's chief executive told *The Japan Times*.

So far, he's had modest success. After the offer was announced in fall, a handful of employees opted to quit smoking, the company said. No word on the reaction from the rest of the diehard smokers, but we're guessing it's unprintable.

We like the idea of incentives to help people cut down or quit (or never start) smoking. If a few extra days of vacation works, then so be it. If Piala's smokers object, they can snuff it _ and also gain the extra vacation.

In the U.S., many American companies have started wellness programs that reward employees for healthier behaviors. Some companies won't hire smokers. Others charge them more for health insurance. Those incentives and others have helped millions of Americans stop smoking.

Here's another incentive: In recent weeks, several big tobacco companies have been running prime time TV commercials and full page ads in newspapers under a federal court order. The stark message: Smoking kills. "More people die every year from smoking than from murder, AIDS, suicide, drugs, car crashes and alcohol, combined." (Emphasis original.)

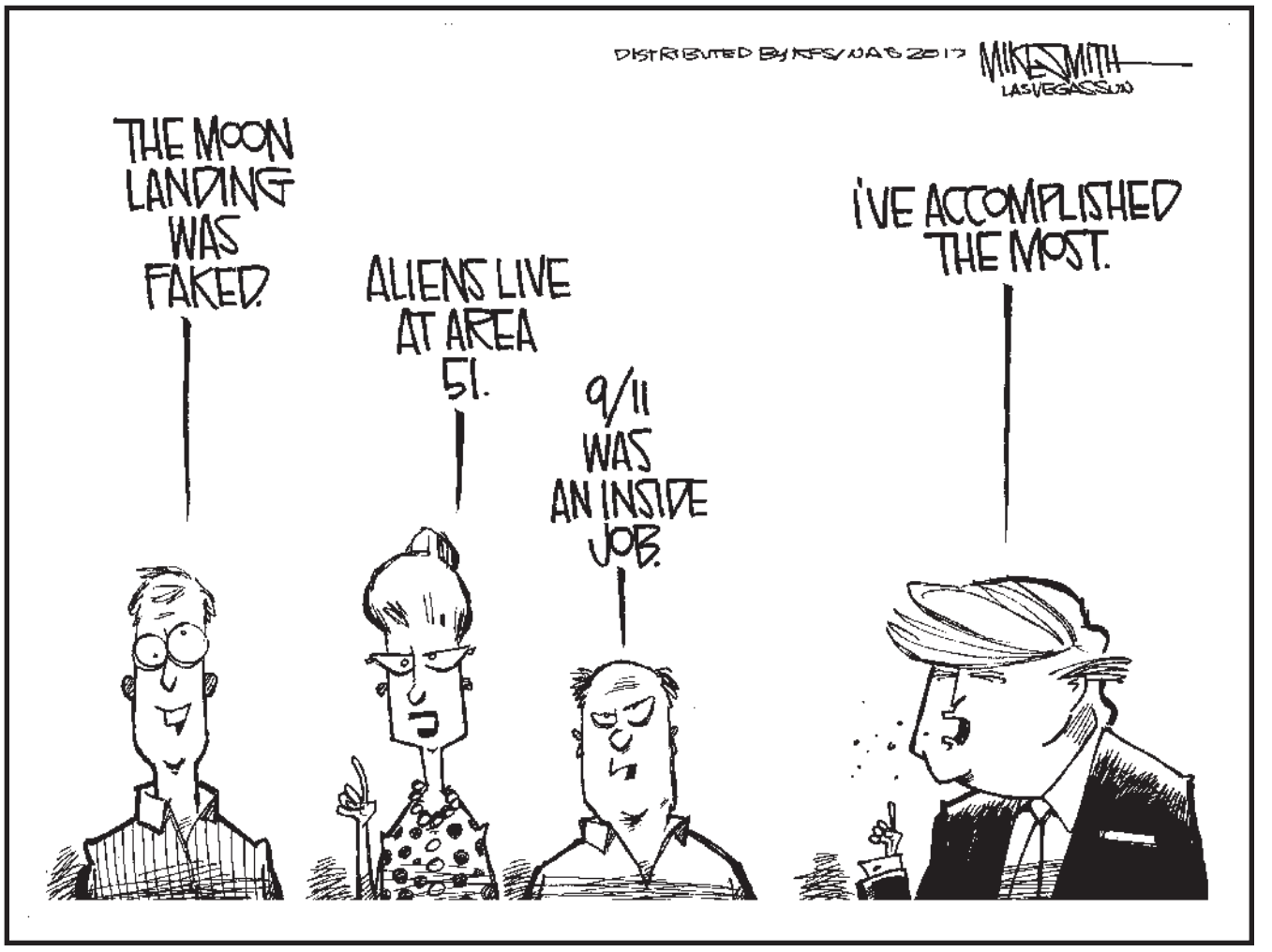
Japanese leaders are now under international pressure to pass a sweeping smoking ban in restaurants and many other public places before Tokyo hosts the 2020 Olympics.

But some Japanese pols are reluctant. Not hard to see why: About 20 percent of Japanese adults smoke, although that number is declining. (Compare that to around 15 percent of American adults who now smoke.) That's a lot of Japanese voters.

Many people try, repeatedly, to quit. It's hard. Smoking laws can help. Illinois banned smoking in restaurants, bars and other venues a decade ago, a move we fervently backed. Few if any among us lament the loss of smoke-choked air in those spots. That includes workers who were endangered by second-hand smoke.

Japanese restaurateurs and entrepreneurs who seek to attract the widest possible international clientele during the Olympics _ and after _ will ban smoking. Wouldn't it be terrific if the Tokyo Olympics sparked a Great Japanese Smokeout?

(c)2017 Chicago Tribune


DISTRIBUTED BY MCT/MAS 2017
MIKE SMITH
LAS VEGAS SUN
THE MOON LANDING WAS FAKED.
ALIENS LIVE AT AREA 51.
9/11 WAS AN INSIDE JOB.
I'VE ACCOMPLISHED THE MOST.

Fixing America's food deserts alone won't fix our terrible diets

By CHRISTINE A. VAUGHAN and TAMARA DUBOWITZ
LOS ANGELES TIMES

You are what you eat. It's an expression with roots in the early 1800s that has come to mean if you consume what's good for you, you will be healthy, and if you don't, well, watch out. But our latest research on what influences consumers to make unhealthy food choices has compelled us to turn that axiom on its head: You eat what you are.

In other words, your personal characteristics may be more important to your diet than where you shop and what's available to you—a concept that challenges the popular notion that building supermarkets in so-called food deserts can, by itself, help the nation's consumers develop better eating habits. Sure, if a supermarket is plopped down in a food desert—an area where it is difficult to find affordable or quality fresh food—shoppers may come. But their weakness for doughnuts and cookies will walk through those automatic doors with them.

As a predictor of unhealthy food consumption, social and demographic factors were nearly twice as important as where a person shopped for food, according to our recent Rand Corp. study. The findings come from an ongoing project studying food consumption and food shopping of residents in two low-income Pittsburgh neighborhoods that have long been considered food deserts.

As researchers trying to figure out ways to help people eat better, what we found caused us to think twice about focusing too much on providing more access to healthy choices. We needed to grapple with a version of the nature versus nurture debate, which had arrived in the supermarket aisle.

In our research, we surveyed nearly 1,400 consumers about what they had eaten over the last 24 hours and how often they bought food at supermarkets, convenience stores, specialty grocery stores and other types of food retailers. We also took note of individual characteristics such as age and level of education. When it came to making unhealthy food choices, a consumer's individual characteristics mattered more than where they shopped.

Young consumers were less likely to eat fruits and vegetables, which should come as no surprise to parents everywhere. People without college degrees consumed significantly more sugar-sweetened beverages and "discretionary fats," such as butter.

With age and education came better eating habits. Older people and college graduates ate more fruits and vegetables.

The clear role played by these sociodemographic connections argues for proactive approaches to help people improve the dietary choices they make. Particularly when it comes to eating less junk food, targeted interventions are needed in addition to building supermarkets and stocking them with "good for you" foods. Policymakers should consider putting in place proven strategies that nudge consumers to change their shopping behaviors, such as taxing foods high in added sugars.

In 2014, Berkeley became the first city in the U.S. to slap a tax on sugar-sweetened drinks—a cent for every ounce—and consumption of such beverages dropped by more than 20 percent. In Mexico, an 8 percent tax on high-calorie foods put in place the same year reduced junk food purchases by about 5 percent.

Evidence that people with lower levels of education may be more likely to reduce their consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in the face of such a tax also comes from Mexico. University of North Carolina researchers found that a "soda tax" cut purchases of sugary drinks by 7 percent, and the greatest decrease came among households in the lowest socioeconomic status, which was based on education and income.

With more U.S. cities following suit—including Philadelphia; Boulder, Colo.; Seattle; and Oakland—much-needed additional research should follow on whether these taxes effectively reduce consumption.

More subtle strategies aimed at changing individual behaviors also could make a difference in eating and shopping habits. In-store marketing—where and how foods are displayed—have shown promise in increasing the sales of healthy foods in supermarkets in low-income neighborhoods.

Technology may also play a role. Research has shown that just being exposed to electronically delivered dietary feedback, including advice on how to eat more fruits and vegetables, led to increased consumption of such foods among lower-income individuals with lower levels of education.

It's imperative to figure out how to improve Americans' eating habits. Two-thirds of us are overweight. And being overweight can lead to a host of health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and stroke. Our diets are killing us.

It's hard to make healthy food choices if you can't get to a store that offers them. But what matters most is what you put in your cart once you get there.

Christine A. Vaughan is a behavioral scientist and Tamara Dubowitz is a senior policy researcher at the nonprofit, nonpartisan Rand Corp.

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Rumors ahead of 2018

At the end of the year writers run into their famine season trying to figure out what to write. You struggle to pull one out of the hat, unsuccessfully. So you're tempted to do end-year review, a lazy piece. I think I've skipped it!

With the ring of Christmas bells fading, we begin setting up for New Year's, guardedly hopeful for better days. Some dreadful unfinished business remains on my list.

The Year 2018 is a good time to begin anew, e.g., resetting buttons so we could discuss and define substantive issues on a collective basis. Sounds great but would it happen or ignored altogether?

■■■

Heard Raffy and Arnie are running for office. Asked Magoo, "Running from what or to where…Capital Hill, Navy Hill or As Litu?"

■■■

Incumbent legislators are also eyeing re-election, paralyzed by their "do-nothing" trophy. "Yep! Dey want their cake (80 percent salary hike) and eat it too!" noted Magoo, adding, "What a way to chase the honey wagon."

■■■

The OPA is rumored to be drafting a certain standard for those who plan to seek public office. Candidates must have some pertinent credentials. Said Magoo, "Credentials need full explanation so Da Boysis don't take it to mean kitchen utensils used to stir bone soup."

■■■

The call for change is rumor in itself. In other words, sentiment for change is expressed then shifts to complacency heading into the polls. In brief, we say one thing and do the exact opposite or plunge right into the very bad habit that has gotten us into the deepening mess—ignoring citizen's duty.

■■■

NMC would also be teaching a course on leadership. Said Magoo, "Leadership is an inherent quality." In short, one is born with it. So it's useless teaching it. Ooops!

■■■

Da Boysis would be hushing among themselves to avoid any discussion about the 80-percent salary increase. "Da people dey gonna find out and kick us out of office!" No worries!

■■■

It is also rumored that former representative Manny Borja would seek patent for his kite for investment purposes. When that is done he'd offer Raffy and Biktot a huge discount so they could save taxpayers' money from all future junkets.

■■■

Biktot Hokog and Gary Sword are rumored to have resolved to return the $400,000 they each took from taxpayers and retirees. It's a matter of conscience, isn't it?

■■■

A unicameral legislature with a membership of 10 has been broached every other full moon. We never had the resolve to acknowledge that it is a financial waste, what with a population of less than 56,000. We have 29 members while Guam has 15 with a population twice as large. Must turn "unicameral" into a daily vocabulary! "Oddawise, dey keep pronouncing it 'camera'," Magoo noted, embarrassed.

■■■

The NMI is designing robotic outhouses for placement along the beach and out of the way public places. It should quell the spread of dung by visitors who had to go but can't find restrooms nearby. Useless if there's no running water!

■■■

Rep. Janet Maratita is threatening OPM with an actual appropriation to pay for the estimated $15 million to $22 million cost of within-grade increases. Money would resolve this issue, not half-cocked spouts!

■■■

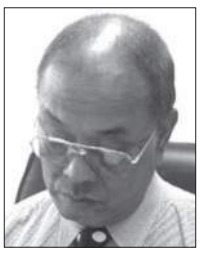
In economies of scale, private industry pays higher to keep operations run by real professional and technical experts. Here, it's the complete opposite. The public sector pays more with over 3,000 employees building upon piles of incompetency. And this is the net result of the failed view that we know government, not! It's time to change this humiliating mindset!

■■■

Hiniyuñg: Makat tana`e suanu na felisitasion este na sakan pot diskuidun mansabiu gi hegsu` I Deni` `nai matotbus gi un` banda linala` mayotmente guine gi alacha.

Mahatsa 80 pot sientu sueddun niha. Gi un` sakudida kahulu` $31,600 pagamientun lehislatura ni dumaña` yan $39,500. Siha gumosa betsan niha $71,100 gi sakan ni matutuhun gi Enero 2018.

Gi hilu` este na diskuidu mahatsa apas kandet yan mamamaila` hatsadan hospitat `nai tat familia ti nina` gagalileg gi halum sisonyan miserapble na kondision.



By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune*.*

Eleksion: Yangin guaha planu-mu malagu otru sakan, haf` unu bidamu mauleg ni umadelanta fuetsan monedan familia? Na ti magahet na inna` fo`na betsan miyu 80 pot sientu na subida?

In` tira siñku pot sientu para i empleau gobietnu. Seru para empleau praibet. Na ti mangai familia lokue` este siha na los probes? Kau para in` luñu` siha gi halum sisonyan mas gastu sin subida pot para u fan siña mañgalamten disiente gi ha`anen niha?

Siempre bai`n fan ekuñgog haf` para in` sañgan guine na patte. Mas lokue` guaha fotmat na inina ginen i publiku manu minagahetña offresimientu ni mayute` balusa kada finagpu` eleksion. Nahuñg na kastigun diskuidun miyu. Oran sattun na inina haf` mas fuera de manadan mantai bali siha na offresimientu.

Felis: Gi `nos kuantos telefon ni hu resibe gi mapos na Lunes, esta man-lodu` bos niha ni man-mahalañg Noche Buenan Isla. Kase gaige ennau gi hihot na relasion tautau-ta gi dikiki` na isla ni sen appattau kontra tai sentidu gi dañkulun siuda. Tai atparehu trañkilu na nochebuena guine siha na petlas.

Sige magahet man-e`mahalañg esta mañgakanta Tafan Magof Todus. Bulan kuestion pot parentela yan atuñgu`. Lamayot patte gi sensian natibu maluñu` gi relihion Katoliku ni umatisa sensian justisia yan yine`ase gi entalu` yan halum tautau-ta.

Ekspirensia: `Nai ha resignague` si Richard Nixon ginen siyan presidente ha sañgan na solu `nai siña i tautau ha komprende haf` benefisiun tumohge gi puntan hogsu` `nai ha pokate i taduñg kañada. Kulan finu` sinetsot dispues `nai ha komprende i minamahlau ni ha pega giya guiya yan familiaña. Era guiya este i asuntun Watergate.

I finapos tautau numana`e mas kinemprende manu na patte gi chalan `nai gaige i hoyu siha. Siempre, ha asegura na ti lotgungue` guenau siha na madog. Amtau dispues kinemprendeña haf` propiu na inadahe.

Rights of victims of crime

Recent news accounts have questioned the propriety of plea bargains by the attorney general, which oftentimes reduce the original charges and sentence. Generally, the Office of the Attorney General cannot comment on cases before the courts as this is governed by the court rules. However, it is important to acknowledge the concerns recently expressed in the media by victims of crimes.

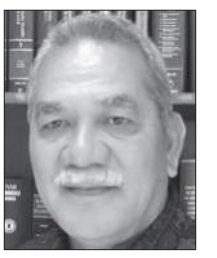
The role of the attorney general in criminal cases is to achieve justice. Every case is evaluated and many considerations are taken, including the victim's input, before a plea deal is finalized. The discretion to plea bargain by the attorney general is a necessary tool in achieving justice for the victims of crimes and the people we serve, including defendants charged with a crime.

Our office, and especially the assistant attorneys general who prosecute criminal cases and the staff in the Criminal Division, feel compassion for those who have been victims of criminal behavior. Our office provides services to all victims of crimes once a case is referred by DPS for prosecution. We do not by law represent the victims, however, and must always balance our ethical obligations to all citizens within the CNMI.

Through the dedicated staff in the Office of the Attorney General's Victim Witness Advocacy Unit, victims of crime are provided support and information, resources, transportation, referrals, and in court assistance, as well making sure that victims are compensated by way of restitution. In addition, the advocates also help reduce the financial, emotional, and physical consequences of criminal victimization.

Every case received by the Office of the Attorney General is reviewed. Investigations are thoroughly conducted, and victims are interviewed and informed of the criminal justice process. Lastly, prosecutors must decide whether or not there is enough evidence against the defendant for a realistic prospect of conviction. Not all cases have sufficient evidence to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, which is the standard burden of proof for charging a case for prosecution. Knowing a crime took place versus proving a crime took place are often at odds. Without sufficient and key evidence, a case cannot be prosecuted.

If you or someone you know is a victim of a crime, please feel free to call the Victim Witness Advocacy Unit at 237-7602 to find out more information. Victims are encouraged to report a crime to ensure their and the community's safety.



By EDWARD MANIBUSAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Edward Manibusan is the attorney general of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Why fix something that's not broken?

This is just something I wanted to share with y'all.

Seeing and catching up past and current issues being addressed by our so-devoted CNMI government litters, it kind of brings back memories that just instantaneously makes my Refaluwasch blood boil to the brink of overheating. To be concise and clear, this letter is to bring attention to all and not just some that what I am about to write about.

About the recently introduced succession bill to be amended and or otherwise altered, I had thought and asked myself over and over, "Why fix something that is not broken?" Take for instance, the late governor Eloy Inos, God rest his soul. When he passed away, he was immediately succeeded by then-senator Jude Hofschneider. How about when the first ever former governor Fitial who was succeeded by the late governor Eloy? Okay, you all or some might be asking by now the same question I had, right?

So, really, why all of a sudden should the succession law be tampered with? And what I mean with tampered is, why the rush to have this bill changed without due democratic process? One might say personal agenda, hmmm. One might also say motive. Whichever the case, it will also bring some form of litigation as you all you mighty men did state in the recently published *Saipan Tribune* article titled, "Change to succession law passes Senate."

In closing, I do truly and firmly believe that change is inevitable. Should one ask what that change is, one would simply state so. All will be revealed in due time. But, hey, do not take my word for it, as this is just simply an open letter for all or some to read and enjoy.

Olomwaay, si yu'us ma'asse, and thank you.

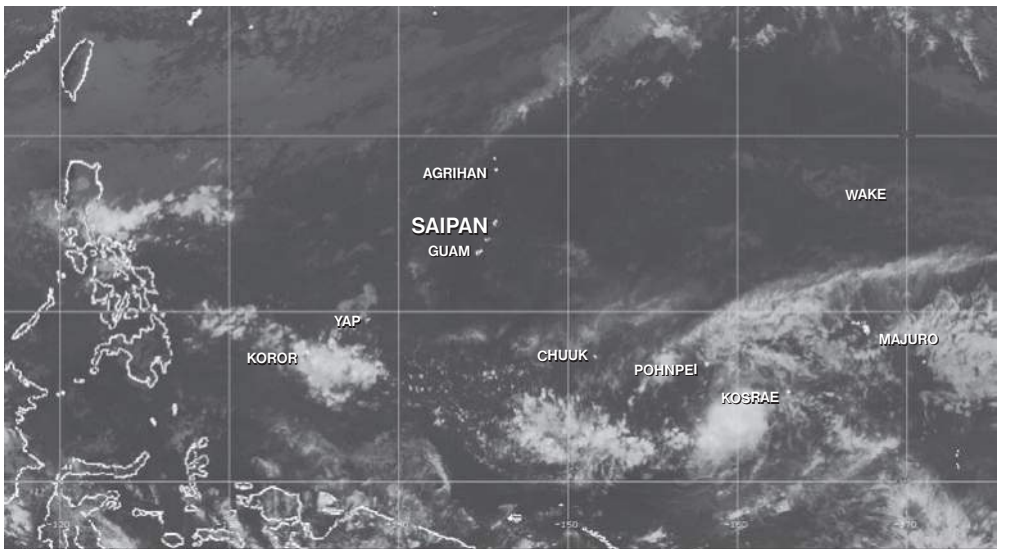
Luciano Jr. Mangarero Rangamar
Eatonville, Washington

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. east winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. east winds 10 to 20 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼78°	▲88° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:19 AM, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2017
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Overall the Marianas remain anchored in a dry season type trade-wind regime. Biggest change in the grids covers a cold front that moved off Japan a day or two ago. Added a northwest swell to the marine grids, arising from winds behind this front. We are still expecting a rise in clouds late in the period, it could be accompanied by a rise in showers also. The other interesting new wrinkle is both the ECMWF-HiRes and the GFS bring in a shear line days 9 and 10. This time of year, that is more likely than the tropical cyclone the GFS has been trying to cough up, so for now allowed that into the grids since it will not yet affect the text based forecast. We may have to make a decision in a couple of days though, when it moves from day 9 into day 7.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	83° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	73° / 63°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	39° / 21°
Hong Kong	Cloudy	66° / 63°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	78° / 68°
London	Cloudy	50° / 45°
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	70° / 50
Manila	Partly Cloudy	86° / 77°
Melbourne	Sunny	84° / 64°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 69°
New York	Windy	41° / 28°
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	48° / 39°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	46° / 43°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	46° / 28°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	57° / 46°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	50° / 32°
San Francisco	Showers	56° / 45°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	39° / 16°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	48° / 36°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	39° / 28°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:25 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.33
7:34 AM	LOW TIDE	0.51
2:22 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.94
9:22 PM	LOW TIDE	0.54

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Thursday	6:41 AM	5:55 PM
Friday	6:41 AM	5:56 PM
Saturday	6:42 AM	5:56 PM
Sunday	6:42 AM	5:57 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:28 am	12:52 pm
Thursday	-	1:21 am	1:36 pm
Friday	-	2:17 am	2:22 pm
Saturday	-	3:15 am	3:13 pm
Sunday	-	4:17 am	4:08 pm

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Bank of Hawaii increases minimum wage

HONOLULU—Bank of Hawaii announced Dec. 23 that it is increasing its minimum wage level to $15 per hour effective Jan. 1, 2018. The current level is $12 per hour.

The increase allows the bank to have a minimum wage level that is in line with the state's "living wage," which is often cited as approximately $30,000 annually for single individuals. The move also places the bank's starting wage well in excess of the current state minimum wage rate of $9.25. The move will positively impact 565 bank employees.

Additionally, the bank also announced that it is rewarding all employees below the senior vice president level with cash bonuses of $1,000, payable this week. That move will benefit 2,074 employees or 95 percent of the workforce. Both the bonus and minimum wage levels will apply to Hawaii-based employees as well as employees in Guam, Saipan, Palau, and American Samoa.

"Our employees are, by far, our greatest asset. It's our pleasure to reward our team with this holiday opportunity," said bank chair, president and CEO Peter Ho. "We've recently been thinking about increasing our minimum wage level throughout the organization to the living wage level. The adjustments to the corporate tax rate provided further momentum to execute on the plan."

Bank of Hawaii Corp. is an independent regional financial services company serving businesses, consumers and governments in Hawaii, American Samoa and the West Pacific. The company's principal subsidiary, Bank of Hawaii, was founded in 1897. For more information about Bank of Hawaii Corporation, see the company's website, www.boh.com. ***(PR)***

NMI Supreme Court vacates trial court DNA order

On Dec. 21, 2017, the Supreme Court issued its decision in *Nevada D.H.H.S. Division of Welfare v. Raymond Lizama*, 2017 MP 16. The high court vacated the trial court's order for DNA testing.

The underlying case arose from Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Welfare Division and Patricia Taisague's complaint to enforce a Nevada judgment and order finding that Raymond Lizama was the father of a minor child and ordering him to pay child support.

Lizama asserted a statutory non-paternity defense under the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act. Following Lizama's motion, the trial court ordered a DNA test to determine paternity.

Taisague appealed the order, requesting the Supreme Court to vacate the DNA order and instruct the trial court to enforce the Nevada order.

The issue on appeal was, initially, whether under CNMI law and in light of the federal Full Faith & Credit for Child Support Orders Act, a party could seek to have a new determination of paternity completed when such a determination has already been decided in another state's court. However, since Taisague appealed, the Commonwealth Legislature enacted the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act. UIFSA replaced URESA, the act under which the court issued the DNA order. The high court therefore considered whether UIFSA applied retroactively to the appeal before it and, if so, whether the trial court's DNA order was valid under the new law.

The high court first considered whether it had jurisdiction to hear the appeal.

The high court determined that although the DNA order was not a final order, the Supreme Court could consider the appeal pursuant to the collateral order doctrine, a doctrine which allows an appellate court to consider an appeal when the order addresses a separate but important issue that would otherwise be unreviewable. The high court then considered whether UIFSA applied to the appeal.

Looking to the plain language of the statute, the high court determined the Legislature did intend the law to apply retroactively to all pending actions, including Taisague's appeal. Because the intervening law eliminated the defense of non-paternity and did not affect Lizama's substantive rights, the high court vacated the DNA order and remanded the case to the trial court.

The high court's full opinion is available at http://www.cnmilaw.org/supreme17.html

For further information, contact the Supreme Court at 236-9715. ***(PR)***

Emergency water service interruption

There was an emergency water service interruption in the Kannat Tabla, Fina Sisu, Chalan Kiya, As Terlaje, Chalan Laulau, Middle Road, and Beach Road areas is due to a 14-inch transmission water line break on Tun Herman Pan Road (Airport Road) across Skyway Café on the northbound outer lane.

Repairs were completed the morning of Friday, Dec. 22, 2017, but due to the limited water supply in the Kannat Tabla Tank, Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers will be experiencing intermittent water service as the system stabilizes.

Customers will be receiving limited water service and are advised to conserve water usage as the tank continues to refill in the next few days.

CUC customers in Kannat Tabla, Fina Sisu, Chalan Kiya, and As Terlaje will be experiencing low pressure during this period.

Customers in the areas of Chalan Laulau, Beach Road, and Middle Road up to the Gualo Rai Intersection were scheduled to receive water on Sunday, Dec. 25, from 6am to 9am.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates. ***(CUC)***

Partial funding for Guam's anti-snake program

WASHINGTON—Interior Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech has authorized $147,140 for interdiction work being conducted against brown tree snakes, *Boiga irregularis*, at commercial ports in Guam.

Funds were provided to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services, a partner in ongoing efforts to contain the spread of this invasive snake.

"We are working to meet the multiple priorities across the U.S. insular areas under the current budgetary conditions," said Domenech. "The brown tree snake has already done significant damage to Guam, and it is critical that it does not spread to other islands in the region."

The total fiscal year 2018 appropriations are estimated to be $932,749.

U.S. Congress continues to provide funding in support of controlling the BTS in Guam and preventing its spread to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Hawaii, and the freely associated states in the larger Micronesian region.

Inadvertently introduced during World War II, the BTS has caused the extinction of many native and endemic species of birds and lizards on the island of Guam, and has had cascading ecological effects on other native plants and animals. The BTS has also disrupted economic activity by causing power outages. This collaborative effort involves several federal agencies, Hawaii State, and island governments in the Micronesia region. ***(PR)***

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

SECURITY SERVICES INVITATION FOR BIDS NMC IFB 18-001

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement of Security Services for the As Terlaje Campus, Saipan.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing Wednesday, December 6th, 2017 between the hours of 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

Bid Submissions are due no later than 10:00 A.M, January 08, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. In accordance with Public Laws 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is available to local businesses for this procurement.

For Bidders located outside of the CNMI: May request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this Invitation For Bids (IFB), if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

Approved by:

/s/ Anita Camacho
NMC Procurement Manager

A Land Grant Institution accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and by The Senior Commission for Colleges and Universities of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS NMC IFB 18-002

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF A NEW FILTRATION SYSTEM

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement and delivery of a NEW AQUATIC FILTRATION EQUIPMENT.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19TH, 2017 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

For Bidder located outside of the CNMI may request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Bid Packages are due no later than 10:00 a.m., JANUARY 19, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. You may request a copy of the NMC IFB 18-002 packet via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through the USDA-NIFA authorized under the Hatch Act, as amended August 11, 1955, award # 2016-31100 (Regular).

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bid offers for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

A Land Grant Institution accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and by The Senior Commission for Colleges and Universities of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges

Northern Marianas College
Procurement & Property Management Office
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Tel: (670) 237-6824 ext. 23/22 Fax: (670) 235-7601
E-mail: ppmo@marianas.edu

INVITATION FOR BIDS NMC IFB 18-003

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF NEW COMPUTER SYSTEMS FOR CREES SAIPAN, ROTA AND TINIAN STATIONS

Northern Marianas College is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the procurement and delivery of NEW COMPUTER SYSTEMS for CREES Saipan, Rota and Tinian.

Specifications and Scope of Work packages may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, commencing TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19TH, 2017 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.**

For Bidder located outside of the CNMI may request a copy of the IFB via fax (670) 235-7601 or email to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Bid Packages are due no later than 10:00 a.m., JANUARY 22, 2018, at Northern Marianas College, As Terlaje Campus, Procurement Office, Bldg. L, 2nd Floor, Saipan, MP 96950. You may request a copy of the NMC IFB 18-003 packet via fax (670) 235-7601 or e-mail to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through the USDA-NIFA authorized under the Hatch Act, as amended August 11, 1955, award # 2016-31100 (Regular).

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The NMC reserves the right to reject any and/or all bid offers for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College. All costs incurred by the proposer to prepare a response to this solicitation and subsequent inquiries shall be borne by the proposer. All submittals shall become the property of NMC.

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

A Land Grant Institution accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges and by The Senior Commission for Colleges and Universities of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

This is to inform all Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC)-approved Contractors (including Tinian and Rota contractors) that we are currently updating our Approved Contractor Listing for calendar year 2018. In order for NMHC to extend your company's inclusion on our listing for another year, you must submit the documentations listed below. Those companies that are not on our list of approved contractors but wish to be included are likewise encouraged to submit the following:

1. Valid CNMI Business License
2. Current Financial Statements (certified by the principle executive officer and principle financial officer)
3. 2 Years Business Gross Revenue (BGR) Tax Returns
4. 2 Years Corporate Income Tax Returns (1120)
5. Clearance Letter from the Department of Labor
6. Certificate of Compliance from the Revenue & Taxation Office
7. Workmen's Compensation Policy
8. Name of Insurance Company(ies) Currently Dealing With
9. A list of on-going/completed projects showing name of project, start and completion dates, and contract amounts
10. At least three (3) reference letters from owners of the completed projects
11. List of vendors and suppliers and at least three reference letters from them (CONSTRUCTION QUARRY, READY-MIX CEMENT & HARDWARE STORES)
12. Company background
13. Articles of Incorporation & Company By-Laws, if applicable
14. Annual Report (Registrar of Corporations)

FAILURE TO SUBMIT THE ABOVE DOCUMENTS BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2017 WILL RESULT IN YOUR COMPANY'S ELIMINATION FROM OUR LIST OF "APPROVED CONTRACTORS".

NMHC encourages Minority and Women-Owned Businesses (MBE/WBE) to participate in this Request for Qualifications and that they will be afforded full opportunity to participate and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, or disability status.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

/S/ JESSE S. PALACIOS
CORPORATE DIRECTOR

2017 CUC Holiday Lights and Decoration Contest

PHOTOS By BEA CABRERA

The residence of Maria J. Torres in Kagman 3.

The residence of Josephine Villocino of Garapan

The residence of Vicente A. Santos of San Vicente was among the participants in the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s 2017 CUC Holiday Lights and Decoration Contest.

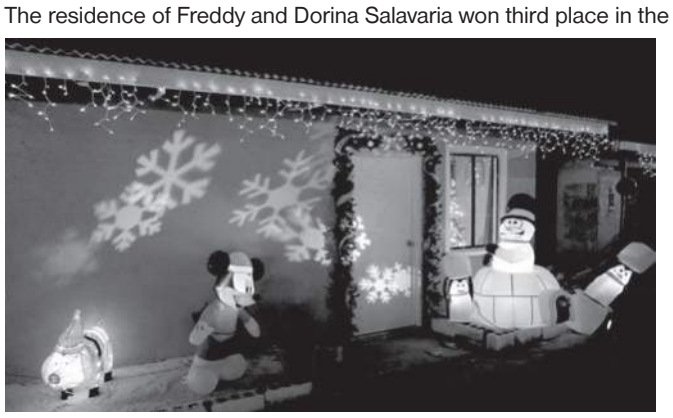
The residence of J.J. and Betty Ann Cabrera won first place in the 2017 CUC Holiday Lights and Decoration Contest.

The residence of Jose A. Reyes and Soledad C. Duenas of Kagman 2.

The residence of John Lisua and Catherine Pangelinan won second place in the 2017 CUC Holiday Lights and Decoration Contest.

The residence of Diego B. Songsong of Sadog Tasi.

The residence of Freddy and Dorina Salavaria won third place in the 2017 CUC Holiday Lights and Decoration Contest



The residence of Jessica H. Pangelinan of Koblerville.

The residence of Jack C. Muna of Koblerville.

The residence of Regino A. Ben of Garapan.

Business

Hot holiday items: Multi-use cookers, toy monkeys, velvet

NEW YORK (AP—Multi-use cookers, toy monkeys, and lots of velvet. Here's a look at what experts say were some of the most popular items this holiday season:

TOYS: Fingerlings, the $15 colorful monkeys that wrap around a finger, have been hard to find sometimes. Other hot items were the LOL Surprise ball, which hides small dolls and other trinkets in layers inside. And Hatchimals, animatronic bird-like creatures that hatch from eggs, were back this year with new twists after being a hit last year. Board games are popular too, particularly messy ones like Soggy Doggy, which shakes water onto players. And Star Wars toys related to the latest movie are faring well, though not matching last year's success, says Jim Silver, editor-in-chief of toy site TTPM.

CLOTHING: Cold weather has driven shoppers to buy coats, boots and gloves, but they're also picking up other fashion items, says Scott Bernhardt, president of Planalytics, which consults with retailers on weather patterns. Velvet is again taking center stage, with blazers, dresses and wide-leg pants all being the most-wanted pieces, says Lyst, a massive fashion e-commerce platform.

HOUSEWARES: Gadgets like the Instant Pot, which combines a pressure cooker, a slow cooker, rice cooker and more, are still hot this year. In the year that ended in November, sales of multi-use cookers rose 79 percent to more than $300 million, says the NPD Group, a market research firm. Multi-cookers were big hits over Thanksgiving weekend and inventory was sold out or low, but has since been replenished, NPD says.

CONSUMER ELECTRONICS: New Apple iPhones and watches as well as new video consoles topped shoppers' list for consumer electronics, says Craig Johnson, president of consulting group Customer Growth Partners. Popular consoles included the hand-held Nintendo Switch, and nostalgia has made the Super NES Classic, a miniature version of the coveted 1990s console, hard to find.

Shoppers spending more may make a merry season for retailers

NEW YORK (AP)—Shoppers who are feeling good about the economy and spending more than expected on items like kitchen gadgets, toys and coats could make this the best holiday season in several years.

That's good news for retailers, some of which have had few reasons of late to be merry. But there's no question that stores need to keep adapting to how people shop as spending moves online. Customer sentiment could shift again based on how they feel the tax overhaul is affecting them. Tax cuts mean some shoppers may have more money in their pockets, but they could opt to save it instead of spend it.

Experts have issued rosy forecasts for the season. Shoppers seem to be in the mood as unemployment is at 17-year low and consumer sentiment has reached its highest level since 2000.

"I feel confident and optimistic about spending this year," said Jorge Nova of Miami as the shopping began on Thanksgiving weekend, when he lined up at Best Buy and bought a 65-inch TV. "I don't really have a clear budget. It's been a good year for me."

Shoppers are spending at a pace not seen since the Great Recession, says Craig Johnson, president of retail consulting group Customer Growth Partners. Jack Kleinhenz, chief economist at the National Retail Federation, predicts retail sales will meet or exceed the trade group's holiday forecast. That could mark the best performance since 2014. And Tom McGee, CEO of the International Council of Shopping Centers, believes mall traffic and sales were higher than last year as shoppers bought electronics, clothing and toys.

The week leading up to Christmas is critical for stores, accounting for more than 20 percent of traffic for the overall season, says ShopperTrak, which monitors foot traffic. Because of the calendar this year, with a full weekend leading into Christmas, retailers also may see more late shoppers.

"I procrastinate every year," said Rick Daigneault of Warwick, Rhode Island, who was just starting his shopping last Sunday at his local mall. "It never fails. Christmas Eve, I'm always at CVS looking for stocking stuffers."

Another last-minute shopper, Brittany Williams, 27, was loading up on gifts for her niece and nephew at an Atlanta shopping center the Saturday before Christmas. She didn't buy online because she was afraid packages wouldn't arrive on time for the holidays. "I waited too long and I don't want to take a chance of it not arriving when I need."

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9715 Facsimile (670)236-9702

REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS
RFP18-JUDICIARY-01
SUBMISSION DATE: January 27, 2018 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR THE GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWEE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE CASHIER WINDOW, DOOR #5, LOCATED AT THE GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL PROPOSALS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
INVESTIGATOR

Opening Date: 12/11/17 Closing Date: Continuous
POSITION: Investigator EXAMINATION NO. OPA-17-002

For more information, please visit our website at www.opacnmi.com or come visit us at our office in Capitol Hill. Interested persons may also pick up a copy of the Examination Announcement at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in Gualo Rai. Completed employment application form and pertinent documents must be submitted at the Office of the Public Auditor.

Office of the Public Auditor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Website: http://opacnmi.com
1236 Yap Drive, Capital Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Email: mail@opacnmi.com
Phone: (670) 322-6481

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB18-DLNR/LRS-034
SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: JANUARY 22, 2018 TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE 60" LARGE FORMAT COLOR PRINTER PLOTTER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LANDS & NATURAL RESOURCES, DIVISION OF LANDS, REGISTRATION, & SURVEY"

COPIES OF SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ANTHONY T. BENAVENTE
SECRETARY, DLRN

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
INVITATION TO BID (ITB)
ITB18-CHCC/HA-001
SUBMISSION DEADLINE: JANUARY 3, 2018 TIME: 1:00PM

VENTILATORS FOR RESPIRATORY CARE HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATION COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION"

COPIES OF THE ITB PACKET MAY BE PICKED – UP AT CHCC PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY DIVISION-MEDICAL SUPPLY STORAGE FACILITY LOWER BASE SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE CHCC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTIONS IN ANY BIDS, IF TO DO SO SHALL BE IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHCC. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OF THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ PRISCILLA M. IAKOPO
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

ELIZABETH TORRES SANTOS Petitioner,	)	FCD-DI-CIVIL ACTION NO. 17-0400
vs.	)	**SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION**
JEFF P. SANTOS Respondent,	)	

TO THE ABOVE NAME RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the court, within thirty (30) days after services of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 506557 CK Saipan, MP, 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at P.O. Box 500307 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 12th day of December, 2017.

/s/ Clerk of Court

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICE OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL.: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

BANK PACIFIC, LTD., Plaintiff, -v- MATTHEW A. OOKA, RITA M. OOKA, and the SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, Defendants.	)	CIVIL ACTION NO. 13-0238

SUMMONS FOR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANTS, MATTHEW A. OOKA AND RITA M. OOKA:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is served upon you hereby, within twenty-one (21) days after the fourth publication of this Summons, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC, the Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Post Office Box 522, Saipan, MP, 96950, as soon as practicable after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of Court at Susupe, Saipan. It may be prepared and signed for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice.

If you fail to answer in accordance with this Summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

Dated November 15, 2017 by order of the Court:
/s/
Clerk of Court

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB18-DCCA/HPO-035
SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 22, 2018 TIME: 10:00 A.M

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) NEW DIGITAL COLOR COPIER FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/S/ ROBERT H. HUNTER
SECRETARY, DCCA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-18-2008

For: HAPPY CHILDREN IN PARADISE CAMPAIGN 20th ANNIVERSARY SAIPAN-DA BACKPACKS

Submission /Closing Date: **January 22, 2018** Time: **3:00 p.m.**

Submit sealed proposals to:
Marianas Visitors Authority
Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building
Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861
Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **December 18, 2017, at the Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan,** from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by January 22, 2018, and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA/ Ms. Brenda Repeki in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a **Notice of Intent** by any mode of written communication including facsimile at+1-670-664-3237 or email to brepeki@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **January 22, 2018.**

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Ms. Brenda Repeki at brepeki@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on January 5, 2018.**

/s/ Christopher J. Nelson
Acting Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

Nation

Trump's busy Christmas Eve: calls to troops, talk of Santa

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP)—President Donald Trump's first Christmas Eve in office was a busy one that unfolded like this: tweet against perceived adversaries, cheer U.S. troops spending the holidays overseas, play golf, chat with children anxious to know when Santa will bring their presents, eat dinner with the family and attend a church service.

"Today and every day, we're incredibly thankful for you and for your families," Trump told the troops via video hook-up from his Florida estate, where he is spending the holidays with his family. "Your families have been tremendous. Always underappreciated, the military families. The greatest people on Earth."

Trump briefly addressed members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard stationed in Qatar, Kuwait and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and patrolling the Strait of Hormuz in the Middle East.

Vice President Mike Pence rallied U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan during a surprise visit last week.

Trump complimented each branch of the armed forces, starting with the Army's "Iron Brigade" combat team in Kuwait, which he said is performing a "vital mission" by partnering with the Iraqi, Kuwaiti, Saudi Arabian and Jordanian armies.

TNS

President Donald Trump speaks on the phone with children as they track Santa Claus' movements with the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) Santa Tracker on Christmas Eve at the president's Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Fla., Sunday, Dec. 24, 2017.

He said a Kuwait-based, Marine Corps air-ground task force has provided more than 4,000 flight hours of close air support in the campaign against the Islamic State group, and he thanked sailors aboard the USS Sampson for defending "high-value assets" in the Strait of Hormuz.

Trump also singled out the Air Force's 69th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron in Qatar for engaging more than 700 IS and Taliban targets in five separate countries and winning two trophies in an Air Force bomb competition.

He showered the most praise on the Coast Guard, which impressed him with its rescue operations during a devastating hurricane season.

"You've done such an incredible job in Texas and Florida and Puerto Rico," Trump said. "Many Republicans are very happy but, I have to tell you, the people of Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and lots of other states are even more happy. What a job you've done ... saved thousands and thousands of lives."

Puerto Ricans, however, may quibble with the president's assessment of their state of mind.

Power generation on the U.S. territory is at 65 percent, with nine of Puerto Rico's 78 municipalities still completely in the dark more than three months after Hurricane Maria walloped the island. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has estimated power will not be fully restored across Puerto Rico until May. More than 200,000 homes were damaged and more than 30,000 people have lost their jobs, sparking an exodus of more than 200,000 Puerto Ricans to Florida alone.

In closing, Trump offered thanks to those who are spending time away from their families to "defend all of our families, our freedoms and our pride."

"Every American heart is thankful to you and we're asking God to watch over you and to watch over your families," he said, before he asked journalists to leave the room so he could begin answering any service member questions.

Christmas brings Northeast blizzard, bitter cold in Midwest

CHICAGO (AP)—The good news for many in the Northeast and Midwest was that it has been a white Christmas. The bad news was that a blizzard swept into parts of New England and bitter cold enveloped much of the Midwest.

Even the usually rainy Pacific Northwest got the white stuff. The National Weather Service says it's only the sixth time since 1884 that downtown Portland had measurable snow—only an inch or two—on a Dec. 25.

A blizzard warning was issued Monday for portions of Maine and New Hampshire, with forecasters saying snow of up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) and wind gusts up to 50 mph (80 kph) could make travel "dangerous to impossible."

Most businesses were already shuttered on Christmas Day in New England. One of the few open was The Tobacconist cigar shop in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, where area-resident Dwayne Doherty said he welcomed the fresh blanket of snow.

"I'm actually happy," he said, chuckling as he made his way to his pick-up. "We haven't had snow on Christmas at all in the last few years. It's actually perfect."

States from Montana and the Dakotas to Wisconsin expected wind chill temperatures in places at 40 below zero (40 below Celsius), the National Weather Service said. The upper half of Iowa and northern Illinois also braced for subzero temperatures.

Minnesota was experiencing its most frigid Christmas Day since 1996, with wind chills as cold as 35 degrees below zero, KSTP-TV reported. The National Weather Service warned that those whose skin was exposed in such conditions could get frostbite in as little as 15 minutes.

Snow amounts in the Midwest were not large for this time of year. A storm system that swept from Nebraska through Iowa dropped around 2 inches of snow on Chicago, the weather service said.

That was just enough to provide a picturesque backdrop for those gathering for Christmas dinners in the Chicago area. But it wasn't enough to cause havoc either on roadway or airport runaways.

Chicago's O'Hare International Airport was reporting just six cancelations and average delays of only 15 minutes around noon Monday. There were no cancellations at the city's other major airport, Midway, and delays were less than 15 minutes on average.

The nation's third largest city had comparatively little snow for the season until the weekend—just over 2 inches (5 centimeters) in all, the National Weather Service said.

The city of Milwaukee had 103 salt trucks treating slick spots Monday, according to WITI-TV. The trucks were using treated salt that's deployed when temperatures drop below 15 degrees.

In addition to slowing travel in New England, the storm was responsible for some power outages. Eversource reported more than 20,000 customers in eastern Massachusetts without electricity, the bulk on Cape Cod which was feeling the brunt of strong winds.

ACROSS THE NATION

Lobsterman's gift at Christmas: Free lobsters for the needy

THOMASTON, Maine (AP)—A lobsterman in Maine has carried on his tradition of giving away lobsters to those in need on Christmas. Noah Ames set up his pickup truck in a parking lot in Thomaston on Sunday with a sign that read "Free lobsters today for families truly in need." Ames started the tradition four years ago to demonstrate to his children that Christmas about more than present wish lists, the Portland Press-Herald reported. He said some people who pick up lobsters come with tears in their eyes. "I want to give back to people who are struggling," Ames said. "It's kind of gotten bigger than me. It's a good thing—and the kids are really into it now." In one hour Sunday, he gave out 400 pounds of lobster. He provided 100 pounds that he hauled in on his boat No Worries while the rest was donated by other companies. For the first few years, he refused all offers of money. But last year, he accepted donations for a local family with a young girl who has cancer—a tradition he continued this year as the girl continues to fight the disease. Walter Davis, of Thomaston, says he has stopped by each year. He says this was a particularly rough year with six relatives dying within a few months of each other. "We've had a lot of things on our minds," he said, "And Christmas dinner wasn't one of them."

Secret Service interviews person over manure sent to Mnuchin

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The U.S. Secret Service says it has interviewed someone claiming responsibility for delivering a gift-wrapped package of horse manure addressed to Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin (mih-NOO'-shin). The box was found Saturday at the home of Mnuchin's neighbor in the wealthy Bel Air neighborhood in Los Angeles. The LAPD bomb squad responded to the package, which police say was marked as being from "the American people." Secret Service spokesman Cody Starken said Monday that the agency was contacted by Los Angeles police and interviewed a person who claimed responsibility. He declined to identify the person. Starken says the Secret Service takes all confirmed and alleged threats seriously. He says the agency typically doesn't comment on possible criminal investigations or interviewing practices.

United apologizes to passenger who says US Rep got her seat

HOUSTON (AP)—United Airlines has apologized and given a $500 travel voucher to a passenger who accused the airline of giving her first-class seat to U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, a Houston Democrat. An airline spokeswoman said Monday that its internal systems show the passenger, Jean-Marie Simon, canceled her Dec. 18 seat from Houston to Washington, D.C. after a weather delay. Simon denies that she canceled the flight. She was given a seat in Economy Plus on the flight, and told the Houston Chronicle she saw Jackson Lee sitting in the seat that was assigned to her. United says it upgraded Jackson Lee automatically and not because she was a member of Congress. The congresswoman says in a statement that she didn't ask for anything "exceptional or out of the ordinary."

Asia

N. Korea says it's a 'pipe dream' that it will give up nukes

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea said it is a "pipe dream" for the United States to think it will give up its nuclear weapons, and called the latest U.N. sanctions to target the country "an act of war" that violates its sovereignty.

The U.N. Security Council unanimously approved tough new sanctions against North Korea on Friday in response to its latest launch of a ballistic missile that Pyongyang says can reach anywhere on the U.S. mainland. The resolution was drafted by the United States and negotiated with the North's closest ally, China.

"We define this 'sanctions resolution' rigged up by the U.S. and its followers as a grave infringement upon the sovereignty of our Republic, as an act of war violating peace and stability in the Korean peninsula and the region and categorically reject the 'resolution,'" North Korea's foreign ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

The ministry said the sanctions are tantamount to a "complete economic blockade" of North Korea.

"If the U.S. wishes to live safely, it must abandon its hostile policy towards the DPRK and learn to co-exist with the country that has nuclear weapons and should wake up from its pipe dream of our country giving up nuclear weapons which we have developed and completed through all kinds of hardships," said the statement, carried by the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

AP

In this Dec. 23, 2017, photo distributed on Dec. 24, 2017, by the North Korean government, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un waves during a ruling party conference in Pyongyang, North Korea.

DPRK is short for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

China called for restraint Monday, with Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying saying that nations should "make positive and constructive efforts to de-escalate tensions" on the Korean Peninsula.

Hua said the new U.N. resolution emphasizes "not inflicting adverse humanitarian impact" on North Koreans and not affecting regular economic activities or humanitarian assistance.

The resolution includes sharply lower limits on North Korea's refined oil imports, the return home of all North Koreans working overseas within 24 months, and a crackdown on ships smuggling banned items including coal and oil to and from the country.

The Trump administration's success in achieving the resolution won praise from the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Ben Cardin of Maryland. "That was a good move, a major accomplishment," he said.

Cardin, who spoke on "Fox News Sunday," said the stepped-up sanctions should be followed by diplomacy aimed at bringing the U.S. and China together on a sustained effort to ease tensions in that region.

But the resolution doesn't include even harsher measures sought by the Trump administration that would ban all oil imports and freeze international assets of the government and its leader, Kim Jong Un.

The resolution drew criticism from Russia for the short time the Security Council nations had to consider the draft, and last-minute changes to the text. Two of those changes were extending the deadline for North Korean workers to return home from 12 months to 24 months—which Russia said was the minimum needed—and reducing the number of North Koreans being put on the U.N. sanctions blacklist from 19 to 15.

Vietnam escapes worst of typhoon that battered Philippine provinces

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—A powerful storm that left a trail of death and destruction in the Philippines was downgraded to a tropical depression Tuesday and failed to make landfall in Vietnam.

Hundreds of thousands of people in Vietnam's Mekong Delta had been evacuated as the region braced for the arrival of Typhoon Tembin after the storm left more than 160 people dead in the Philippines.

Weather forecasters had expected the delta's southern tip to be in Tembin's path, and said heavy rain and strong winds starting Monday night could cause serious damage in the vulnerable region, where facilities are not built to cope with such severe weather. By Tuesday morning, the storm was downgraded to a tropical depression and forecasters said it would it not make landfall in Vietnam.

The storm was expected to dissipate over the Gulf of Thailand later Tuesday.

Over the weekend, Tembin unleashed landslides and flash floods that killed at least 164 people and left 171 others missing in the Philippines, according to Romina Marasigan of the government's main disaster-response agency.

Initial reports from officials in different provinces placed the overall death toll at more than 230, but Marasigan warned of double counting amid the confusion in the storm's aftermath and said the numbers needed to be verified.

More than 97,000 people remained in 261 evacuation centers across the southern Philippines on Monday, while nearly 85,000 others were displaced and staying elsewhere, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said.

The hardest-hit areas were Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur provinces and the Zamboanga Peninsula. Tembin hit the Philippines as a tropical storm but strengthened into a typhoon before blowing out of the country Sunday into the South China Sea toward Vietnam.

Philippine officials had warned villagers in accident-prone areas to evacuate early as Tembin approached and the government was trying to find out what caused the widespread storm deaths, Marasigan said. She added that it was difficult to move people from homes shortly before Christmas.

"We don't want to be dragging people out of their homes days before Christmas, but it's best to convince them to quietly understand the importance of why they are being evacuated," Marasigan said at a news conference in Manila.

Tembin was among a series of disasters to hit the predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines at the peak of Christmas preparations.

An inter-island ferry sank off northeastern Quezon province Thursday after being lashed by fierce winds and big waves, leaving at least five people dead. More than 250 passengers and crewmen were rescued. Earlier in the week, another tropical storm left more than 50 people dead and 31 others missing, mostly due to landslides, and damaged more than 10,000 houses in the central Philippines.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Filipino firefighters find all 37 bodies of workers in mall

DAVAO, Philippines (AP)—Philippine firefighters have found all 37 bodies of employees of a U.S.-based company who were trapped in a blaze that gutted a shopping mall in southern Davao city. Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio said that firefighters initially found one body at the NCCC Mall on Sunday, but that extreme heat and thick smoke prevented them from retrieving the bodies of the 36 other employees until Monday. Senior Superintendent Wilberto Rico Neil Kwan Tiu, regional director of the Bureau of Fire Protection, relayed the news to the employees' relatives, who broke into tears. They were told the bodies would be identified by authorities then turned over to their families. All the dead were employees at a call center on the top floor of the four-story mall and run by U.S.-based Research Now SSI, which employs about 500 people. Its chief executive officer, Gary Laben, said the company would help with funeral arrangements and create a fund for contributions for the victims' families.

Pakistan army says Indian fire kills 3 soldiers in Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Pakistan's military says Indian fire across the Line of Control in the disputed Kashmir region has killed three soldiers in what it said was an "unprovoked" ceasefire violation. In a statement, the military said the soldiers were killed Monday in Rawalakot in Kashmir. On Tuesday, situation was still tense and residents were fleeing to safer places in the region. Monday's incident took place hours after the wife and mother of an imprisoned Indian naval officer facing the death penalty in Pakistan for espionage and sabotage were allowed to meet with him. There was no immediate response from India, but the two sides routinely accuse each other of initiating fire. Each controls part of Kashmir but claims it in its entirety, and they have fought two wars over the region.

Afghanistan: Suicide bomber kills 6 in Kabul

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—A suicide bomber struck Monday near an office of the Afghan intelligence service in the capital, Kabul, killing at least six people, including a woman in a passing vehicle, officials said. The Islamic State group claimed the attack. Interior Ministry spokesman Najib Danish said another three people were wounded in the attack, adding that the exact target was unclear. "The bomber was on foot and detonated his suicide vest on the main road," he said. Health Ministry spokesman Ismail Kawasi confirmed the death toll. Both the Taliban and the local Islamic State affiliate have carried out several past attacks in the capital, mainly targeting security forces. Separately in southern Helmand province, six Afghan border police officers were killed when their military vehicle hit a roadside bomb, said Omar Zwak, spokesman for the provincial governor.

Asia

Russian officials bar Navalny from running for president

MOSCOW (AP)—Russian election officials on Monday formally barred Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny from running for president, prompting calls from him for a boycott of next year's vote.

The Central Election Commission decided unanimously that the anti-corruption crusader isn't eligible to run.

Navalny is implicitly barred from running for office because of a conviction in a fraud case which has been viewed as political retribution. He could have run if he was given a special dispensation or if his conviction was cancelled.

Incumbent Vladimir Putin is set to easily win a fourth term in office in the March 18 election, with his approval ratings topping 80 percent.

Over the past year, Navalny has mounted a grassroots campaign which reached out to the most remote corners of Putin's heartland.

Navalny, 41 is the most serious challenger that Putin has faced in all his years in power, and the court cases against him have been widely seen as a tool to keep him from running for office.

In a pre-recorded video message that was released minutes after the Election Commission handed down the decision, Navalny called on his supporters to boycott the vote.

"The procedure that we're invited to take part is not an election," he said. "Only Putin and the candidates he has handpicked are taking part in it."

"Going to the polls right now is to vote for lies and corruption."

Central Election Commission chief Ella Pamfilova told Navalny ahead of its vote to bar him that "maybe we would be interested if you were running," but said the conviction doesn't allow the commission to put him on the ballot.

Speaking before the vote, Navalny told the commission that their decision to bar him would be a vote "not against me, but against 16,000 people who have nominated me, against 200,000 volunteers who have been canvassing for me."

While Putin is all but certain to win an easy victory, the Kremlin wants his performance to be as strong as possible and has been concerned by growing voter apathy.

AP

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who submitted endorsement papers necessary for his registration as a presidential candidate, center, heads to attend a meeting in the Russia's Central Election commission in Moscow, Russia, Monday, Dec. 25, 2017.

Navalny's call for a boycott could hurt the Kremlin's hopes for boosting turnout.

The involvement of Ksenia Sobchak, a 36-year-old star TV host, could raise public interest in the race. While Sobchak has denied colluding with the Kremlin, she could attract some of Navalny's supporters and help boost attendance.

Sobchak criticized Navalny's call for boycotting the vote, saying Monday that the "election is the only way to change something, and boycotting them is inefficient and harmful."

She proposed that Navalny join her campaign if she gets registered for the race.

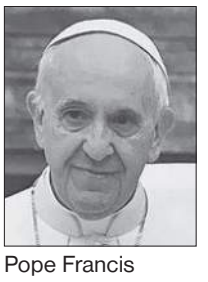
Other veterans of past elections—liberal Grigory Yavlinsky and ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky—are also running. Communists nominated a new face, Pavel Grudinin, director of a big strawberry farm just outside Moscow.

Pope laments 'winds of war' blowing around the world

VATICAN CITY (AP)—Lamenting "the winds of war" blowing around the world, Pope Francis in his traditional Christmas message on Monday called for a two-state solution to find peace in the Middle East and prayed that confrontation can be overcome on the Korean Peninsula.

The pope took particular aim at areas of global tension where President Donald Trump is playing a critical role. Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital has ignited new violence in the Middle East, while confrontation with North Korea over its nuclear tests has escalated tensions in Asia.

"The winds of war are blowing in our world and an outdated model of development continues to produce human, societal and environmental decline," the pope said in his traditional "Urbi et Orbi" ("to the city and to the world") Christmas message and blessing from the central balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square. About 50,000 faithful packed the square.



Pope Francis

As Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus, the pope depicted suffering reflected "in the faces of little children," citing war and other tensions in the Middle East and Africa.

He asked for peace for Jerusalem and the Holy Land, and prayed "that the will to resume dialogue may prevail between the parties and that a negotiated solution can finally be reached, one that would allow the peaceful coexistence of two states within mutually agreed and internationally recognized borders."

Francis also prayed for an end to confrontation on the Korean Peninsula and that "mutual trust may increase."

The Christmas message has become an occasion for popes to survey suffering in the world and press for solutions. Francis urged that "our hearts not be closed" as the inns of Bethlehem were to Mary and Joseph before Jesus' birth.

The pontiff lamented that Syria remains "marked by war," that Iraq has been "wounded and torn" by fighting over the last 15 years and that ongoing conflict in Yemen "has been largely forgotten."

Recalling his recent trip to Bangladesh and Myanmar, the pope urged the international community to work "to ensure that the dignity of the minority groups present in the region is adequately protected."

The pontiff also recalled children who risk their lives at the hands of human traffickers to migrate to safer lands, who suffer because their parents don't have work or who are forced into labor themselves or to fight as child soldiers.

Tunisia tries to defuse tension with UAE amid airline spat

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP—Tunisia tried to smooth out emerging tensions with the United Arab Emirates on Monday after Emirates airline barred Tunisian women from boarding its flights and the North African country responded by suspending the Dubai-based carrier's operations in the air and on the ground.

The spokeswoman for the Tunisian presidency dismissed any notion of a "diplomatic crisis" between the two countries, expressing Tunisia's "understanding" of a decision made by the UAE's government to "protect its territory and its airlines."

After the Emirates' decision caused an outcry in Tunisia, the presidential spokeswoman had to speak publicly on a radio station to explain that the ban targeting Tunisian women followed alleged serious threats of attacks.

The spokeswoman, Saïda Garrach, said the UAE's authorities explained that they made the decision following "serious security information" about alleged plans for attacks by Tunisian women, or women with Tunisian passports, from "tense hotbeds" in Syria and Iraq.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash tweeted that the ban was temporary and due to security reasons.

In a later written statement, Tunisian President Beji Caid Essebsi "called for overcoming these problems as soon as possible to preserve the relations of brotherhood and cooperation between the two peoples of Tunisia and UAE."

But Caid Essebsi said Tunisia will maintain the suspension of all flights by Emirates to and from Tunis until the UAE's government reconsiders its ban. He stressed the need to preserve the dignity of all Tunisian citizens in the country and abroad and to protect the rights of Tunisian women in all circumstances.

Tunisia summoned UAE's ambassador on Friday following Emirates' ban.

Speaking on Shems FM radio, Garrach, the Tunisian presidential spokeswoman, said the UAE decided on the targeted ban "swiftly, without notifying the Tunisian authorities and even their own ambassador in Tunis," given the "seriousness" of the information they held. While "understanding" the Emirati move, she said the way the UAE proceeded was "unacceptable" and required a "quick reaction" from Tunis.

In an apparent attempt to ease Tunisians' discontent, Gargash, the Emirati minister of state, tweeted that the UAE values Tunisian women and their "exemplary empowerment."

The barring of Tunisian women has caused anger among rights groups and political parties in Tunisia. In a joint statement, three rights groups described the UAE's move as "a violation of the basic rights of Tunisian women and agreements on the free movement of people."

A small protest was held outside the UAE Embassy in Tunis in the afternoon. Protesters called the decision "discriminatory" and "a humiliation to Tunisian women."

Since Friday, several Tunisian women have been barred from boarding Emirates flights in Tunis, Abu Dhabi and Beirut.

Good Housekeeping

It's Christmastime, and that means Dogs are now at peak risk of chocolate poisoning

By KAREN KAPLAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

It may be the most wonderful time of the year for people, but it's a time of peak peril for our pets.

Dogs, in particular, face a heightened risk of chocolate poisoning during the Christmas season. According to a new study, the risk is nearly five times greater than at holiday-free times of the year.

Researchers came to this conclusion by scouring patient records from 500 clinics that are part of the United Kingdom's Small Animal Veterinary Surveillance Network. They reviewed 2.7 million records of dogs seen between November 2012 and May 2017 and identified 386 cases of "chocolate exposure" suffered by 375 animals.

The study authors, from the University of Liverpool, hypothesized that these illnesses were clustered around holidays known to feature chocolate: Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and Halloween.

To see if this was indeed the case, they compared vet records during four "risk periods" — one week before and two weeks after each of the holidays — with records from other, "nonfestival dates."

Sure enough, they found that cases of chocolate poisoning were 4.74 times more common during the Christmas risk period than during less wonderful times of the year. In addition, the risk of chocolate poisoning nearly doubled during the Easter risk period compared with the holiday-free baseline.

According to the patients' files, the most common sources of chocolate were candy bars and gift boxes (35 cases), followed closely by Easter eggs (31 cases). Chocolate cupcakes came in third (22 cases) and chocolate oranges were fourth (15 cases).

A combined category of chocolate rabbits, Santa Claus figurines, Advent calendars and Christmas tree decorations accounted for 10 cases of poisoning, and six more were blamed on Toblerone consumption. Then there were five dogs who consumed chocolate liqueurs and one who lapped up a hot chocolate drink.

Typically, the amount of chocolate consumed was deemed "small," but the study authors noted one exception: a dog that ingested "a garden of Easter eggs hidden for a large party of children."

Chocolate is dangerous for dogs (and cats as well) because it contains a chemical called theobromine, which comes from cocoa beans. Humans can metabolize this, but it's not so easy for our four-legged friends. When too much of the chemical gets into their canine systems, the result can be seizures, tachycardia (an abnormally fast heart rate), vomiting or other problems.

None of the 386 poisoning cases in the U.K. study were fatal. But they were undoubtedly uncomfortable for the dogs. Nearly one-third of them (121 cases) were treated with activated charcoal to absorb the theobromine and reduce its circulation through the body. Activated charcoal is administered through a stomach tube or a large syringe.

About as many dogs (114) were treated with the drug apomorphine to induce them to vomit.

Intravenous fluids and antiemetics (drugs to counteract vomiting) were also reported in the treatment of a smaller number of cases.

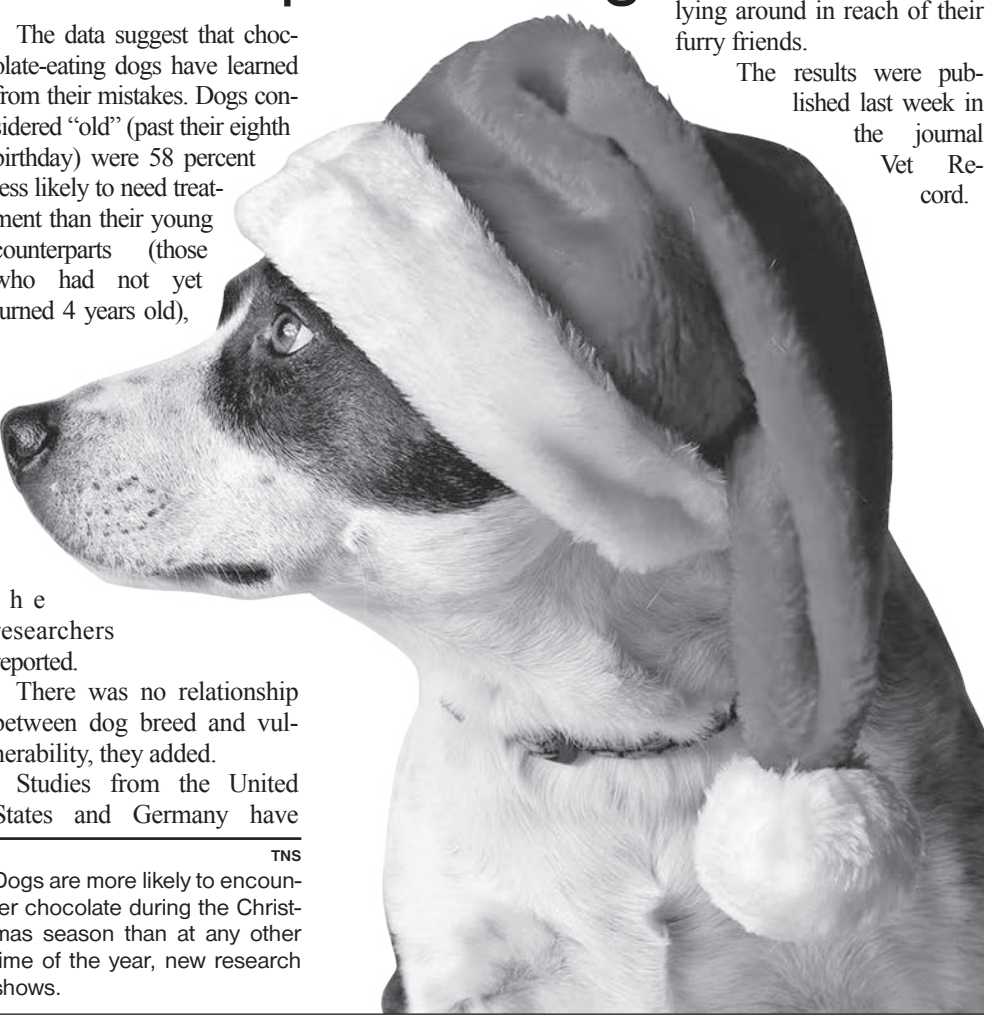
The data suggest that chocolate-eating dogs have learned from their mistakes. Dogs considered "old" (past their eighth birthday) were 58 percent less likely to need treatment than their young counterparts (those who had not yet turned 4 years old), the researchers reported.

There was no relationship between dog breed and vulnerability, they added.

Studies from the United States and Germany have found spikes in chocolate poisoning around Valentine's Day and Halloween, but this pattern did not hold up in the United Kingdom. That may be due to "alternate romantic gift choices (or more fastidious curation by their recipient) and different festival priorities," the University of Liverpool team wrote.

But when it comes to Christmas, let there be no doubt: Dog owners should be extra careful not to leave chocolate lying around in reach of their furry friends.

The results were published last week in the journal Vet Record.



TNS

Dogs are more likely to encounter chocolate during the Christmas season than at any other time of the year, new research shows.

ON GARDENING: Christmas cactus: A national treasure

By NORMAN WINTER
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

It seems as though every year since I graduated from Texas A&M I have been asked how to get poinsettias to re-bloom. It doesn't take long into the discussion before the gardener knows the task is more than formidable. On the other hand, the Christmas cactus, so rare in beauty, is actually easy to grow and re-bloom, maybe for the rest of your life. In fact this is a plant that I often find as a hand-me-down from mom or grandma.

The cacti I used to have in my office were living, blooming proof. Although I had them for several years, they were abandoned for weeks on end during the spring and fall garden season when I was on the road. If they got water or any other light than sitting in a north window, they were lucky.

Every year, however, they rewarded me with their floral displays as if I were a long lost friend, or as if I had been pampering them for months. It was almost incredible. I visited two places before I wrote this to make sure this plant had now fallen out of favor. They were in several different colors. It is amazing that these plants are for sale at these unbelievably low prices.

The Christmas cactus is one of those plants that trigger fierce arguments over its botanical name and even the common name. You would think with a plant this beautiful we could just all get along. First, is it a Christmas cactus or a Thanksgiving cactus? Don't bring that up at the dinner table; no use fighting.

I am just thankful for it whenever it blooms. Even though my stores selling the plants on Dec. 19 called them the zygocactus, that name is no longer correct. Who cares right? Botanically speaking, most taxonomical authorities say the Christmas cacti sold are Schlumbergera x buckleyi, which is a cross between S. truncata and S. russeliana. In fact, there are more than 200 named cultivars. Then there are other reputable sources that say, nope they are Schlumbergera bridgesii. Oh my gosh I nominate them for congress.

TNS

The Christmas Cactus is actually comprised of colorful iridescent bracts.

The bloom period of these hybrids may be somewhat controlled by the amount of uninterrupted darkness the plant receives. You can delay blooming by giving more light. Once the plant receives 12 to 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness each day, buds will usually start to form.

Most of you that have been reading my columns for the past 20 plus years have gathered that I'm a tropical plant nut. Absolutely, and guess where the Christmas cactus is from? This true cactus, minus thorns, is native to the South American rain forest. In Brazil, they grow on tree trunks and limb alongside orchids and bromeliads, wherever rainwater quickly drains away. Their flowers are almost iridescent in shades of lavender, fuchsia, orange, red and white.

Despite the neglect I gave mine back at the office, it is best to keep them in a bright, cool location. Keep the soil lightly moist, but never soggy. Don't fertilize until growth begins in the spring.

Once temperatures stay above freezing, you can move the Christmas cactus outdoors for the spring and summer. Keep it in an area that is shaded, especially in the afternoon. Feed with a dilute water-soluble fertilizer every other time you water. Around the first of October next year, place it in an area where it will receive no light for about 12 hours each late afternoon and night. Buds should start to develop around the first of November and open between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

You can start new Christmas cacti by simply taking stem sections of two or three segments and sticking them in very porous, moist potting soil. I actually prefer sand. They will root very quickly. These tropical cacti are fun to grow and in my opinion the easiest holiday plant to get to re-bloom. Buy some now and start a tradition whereby your children or grandchildren see them blooming each Thanksgiving or Christmas at your home. You will be making lasting memories.

Life & Style

Got tips? Hurry! They're still worth $10M to robbed museum

BOSTON (AP)—A hot tip could still earn you a cool $10 million from a Boston museum desperate to recover a trove of missing masterpieces. But you'd better hurry.

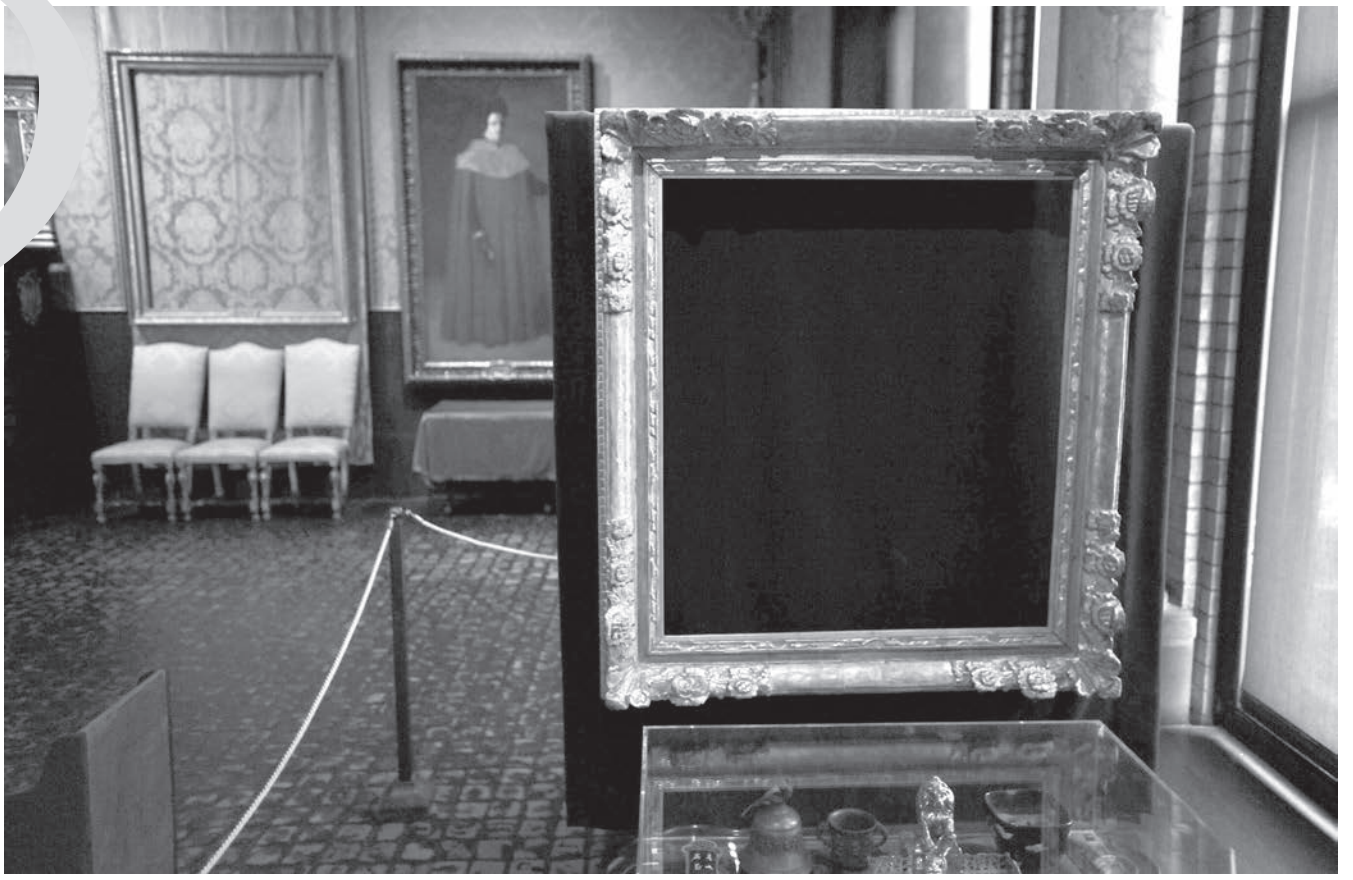
Midnight Dec. 31 is the deadline to collect a doubled reward being offered for information leading to the recovery of 13 works worth an estimated $500 million—including paintings by Degas, Manet, Rembrandt and Vermeer—stolen in 1990 from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

So far, no takers.

That's a big disappointment to the museum and the FBI, which still hasn't managed to solve the largest art heist in U.S. history. Both had hoped the enhanced reward would spur a flurry of fresh leads. Instead, it's been like watching paint dry.

"Right now we're laser-focused on this deadline," said museum spokeswoman Kathy Sharpless. "Clearly there's a sense of urgency on our part. We want our paintings back."

A look at the case and what's likely to happen next:



In this March 11, 2010, file photo, empty frames from which thieves took "Storm on the Sea of Galilee," left rear, by Rembrandt and "The Concert," right foreground, by Vermeer, remain on display at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. Midnight Dec. 31, 2017, is the deadline to collect a doubled reward being offered for information leading to the recovery of 13 works worth an estimated $500 million. AP

THE HEIST

On March 18, 1990, two men masquerading as Boston police officers gained entrance to the museum by telling the security guard at the watch desk that they were responding to a report of a disturbance, according to authorities.

The guard didn't follow museum policy and allowed the men inside. He and another guard were handcuffed and locked in the basement while the thieves made off with the art.

The missing pieces include Rembrandt's only known seascape, "Christ in the Storm on the Sea of Galilee," and Vermeer's "The Concert," one of fewer than 40 known paintings by the 17th-century Dutch painter.

Twenty-seven years later, there are still empty frames on the walls of the gilded museum where the great works once were displayed.

THE INVESTIGATION

The FBI told The Associated Press in 2015 that two suspects—both Boston criminals with ties to organized crime—were deceased.

The agency has said investigators believe the paintings moved through mob circles to Connecticut and Philadelphia, where the trail went cold.

Federal prosecutors say Robert Gentile, an 81-year-old reputed Connecticut mobster, is the last surviving person of interest. Federal agents have searched Gentile's Manchester home several times.

Prosecutors have said another gangster's widow claimed her husband gave Gentile two of the paintings. Authorities also have said Gentile talked about the stolen paintings with fellow prisoners, and once told an undercover FBI agent he had access to two of the paintings and could negotiate the sale of each for $500,000. Gentile denies knowing anything about the theft.

Meanwhile, the five-year statute of limitations on crimes associated with the actual theft expired more than 20 years ago, so the thieves—even if captured—no longer could be prosecuted.

Although authorities haven't offered blanket immunity for whoever has the paintings now, they say they're willing to consider immunity for anyone who can help them recover the stolen works.

THE REWARD

For years, the museum has offered a $5 million reward. Last May, trustees upped it to $10 million—but only through the end of 2017.

Dutch art sleuth Arthur Brand, who has helped European authorities recover other stolen works, says he has spoken to former police officers, ex-members of the Irish Republican Army and others, and remains convinced he is inching closer to solving the mystery.

"I said from the beginning if it's not solved by the first of January it will become ... less likely that it will ever be solved," Brand told the AP. "We are getting closer. There are so many people working on it that in the end the truth will come out—I'm absolutely certain about that. The only question is, do the paintings still exist?"

Sharpless, the museum spokeswoman, says the gallery will happily write that check for the right tip.

"We're really not interested in theories as much as in good credible information and facts," she said. "It only takes one good piece of information to help solve this puzzle."

Queen Elizabeth II, Markle, royals attend Christmas service

SANDRINGHAM, England (AP)—Queen Elizabeth II and senior members of the British royal family—along with newcomer Meghan Markle, an American actress engaged to Prince Harry—attended a Christmas church service on Monday as a crowd of local residents gathered.

Markle smiled and gave a brief wave in her first public appearance with the queen. She and Harry stopped to talk with several locals on their way back to the queen's residence.

"She was very, very lovely," said Judith Wallis, a woman who chatted briefly with the couple. The crowd was larger than in previous years, perhaps because of curiosity about Markle.

The queen was joined by her husband, Prince Philip, and close family members including grandson Prince William and his wife, Kate, who is expected to give birth to the couple's third child in the spring.

Elizabeth, 91, and Philip, 96, missed last year's church service because they had the flu, but they seemed in good health during Monday's brief appearance. Philip walked back to the queen's house with other royals, but Elizabeth opted to be driven.

She and Prince Charles' wife, Camilla, rode to and from the service in a chauffeured Bentley with a horse-themed hood ornament, perhaps chosen by the queen, who loves horses and horse racing.

Elizabeth used her annual Christmas message to pay tribute to the way London and Manchester pulled together after extremist attacks earlier this year. The brief speech was televised on Christmas Day in the United Kingdom and the 51 other Commonwealth countries.

The queen, seated at a desk in her study, praised Manchester, hit by a suicide bomber in May, and London, which endured attacks on Parliament, London Bridge and other landmarks.

She said the cities' "powerful identities shone through over the past 12 months in the face of appalling attacks."

The queen said it was her privilege to visit young survivors of the attack on a Manchester concert hall as they were recovering from the blast which claimed 22 lives.

"I describe that hospital visit as a 'privilege' because the patients I met were an example to us all, showing extraordinary bravery and resilience," Elizabeth said.

Elizabeth also had kind words for her husband, who this year stepped down from most public duties because of his advancing years. She praised him for his "support and unique sense of humor."

The queen and Philip are spending the holidays at Elizabeth's country estate in Sandringham, 110 miles (175 kilometers) north of London.

The royal family had a private lunch scheduled after the church service, with turkey reared on the estate featured on the menu.

This is the first Christmas the family is joined by Markle. The actress and Prince Harry plan to marry at Windsor Castle in May.

Markle seemed comfortable walking to the church arm-in-arm with Harry. She and Kate curtsied in front of the queen after the service was over.

3 Miss America officials resign, one is apologetic to ex-winner

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP)—The top leadership of the Miss America Organization, implicated in an email scandal that targeted past pageant winners for abuse based on their appearance, intellect and sex lives, resigned on Saturday, with the outgoing president apologizing to a winner whose weight he ridiculed.

The president, Josh Randle, told The Associated Press his comment responding to an email to his private account about the physical appearance of 2013 winner Mallory Hagan came months before he started working for the Miss America Organization in 2015. But he said it was wrong.

"I apologize to Mallory for my lapse in judgment," Randle said on Saturday. "It does not reflect my values or the values I worked to promote at the Miss America Organization. Although this terrible situation was not caused or driven by me, in light of recent events and new developments, I am no longer willing to continue in my capacity as president and earlier today offered my resignation to the MAO Board of Directors."

Randle said his resignation was voluntary and had not been requested by the board of Miss America, which is based in Atlantic City.

Hagan did not respond to a message seeking comment on the resignations of Randle, CEO Sam Haskell and Chairwoman Lynn Weidner, a former Miss New Jersey.

Weidner told the AP Saturday night she has "nothing but love for the Miss America Organization and the incredible women" who comprise it.

"Although I have certainly been vilified unjustly by some in recent days, I know that all will be made more clear with time," she said. "My 46 years of involvement and my past 10 years on the board as a full-time volunteer have been a gift. It is amazing how most of the greatest blessings in my life can be traced back to that summer day when I was 16 years old and entered my first local Miss America Pageant."

'Star Wars: The Last Jedi' still dominating the movie galaxy

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Star Wars: The Last Jedi" is continuing its dominance over the movie galaxy as expected, outpacing three new releases. The eighth installment in the Disney-owned space saga is expected to add another nearly $69 million to its coffers over the weekend, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Sony's adventure caper "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" debuted in second place with $34 million. A pair of critically panned new musicals followed: Universal's "Pitch Perfect 3" opened in third place with $20.4 million and Fox's "The Greatest Showman" debuted in fourth with $8.6 million.

These three new releases collectively earned less than "The Last Jedi" since opening on Friday.

"It's an overwhelming array of options at the movie theater, which could prove daunting to most moviegoers," said box office analyst Paul Dergarabedian of comScore. "But you'd have to be a Scrooge not to find a movie you like in this marketplace."

Sony's president of distribution, Adrian Smith, said he was "absolutely pleased" with the performance of "Jumanji" so far.

"It's above our expectations," he said. "We have incredible momentum as we head into one of the biggest movie-going weeks of the year."

This image released by Lucasfilm shows BB-8 in "Star Wars: The Last Jedi." LUCASFILM VIA AP

Dergarabedian said the period between Christmas and New Year's Day is traditionally among the busiest times at the Cineplex. Families are together and theaters are brimming with blockbusters and awards-season hopefuls. Two celebrated films, "Darkest Hour" and "The Shape of Water," expanded to hundreds more screens this weekend.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to comScore. Where available, the latest international numbers for Friday through Sunday are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Tuesday.

1. **"Star Wars: The Last Jedi,"** $68.5 million ($75.1 million international).
2. **"Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle,"** $34 million ($49.5 million international).
3. **"Pitch Perfect 3,"** $20.4 million ($9.8 million international).
4. **"The Greatest Showman,"** $8.6 million ($4.1 million international).
5. **"Ferdinand,"** $7 million ($21.5 million international).
6. **"Coco,"** $5.2 million ($13.3 million international).
7. **"Downsizing,"** $4.6 million.
8. **"Darkest Hour,"** $4.1 million.
9. **"Father Figures,"** $3.2 million.
10. **"The Shape of Water,"** $3 million.

'Real Housewives of New York City' star arrested in Florida

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. (AP)—A star of the reality television series "The Real Housewives of New York City" apologized Sunday after she was arrested in Florida, saying her visit to exclusive Palm Beach brought up "long-buried emotions."

Palm Beach County court records show 52-year-old Luann de Lesseps was booked Sunday on charges of battery on a law enforcement officer, resisting arrest with violence, disorderly intoxication and corruption by threat.

De Lesseps, who lives in Sag Harbor, New York, was released on her own recognizance, according to jail records. Her next court appearance is scheduled Jan. 25.

The circumstances of de Lesseps' arrest late Saturday in Palm Beach were not immediately available. The Palm Beach Post reported that a prosecutor said de Lesseps slammed a door and kicked at least one police officer, and she made threatening comments before she was arrested.

In a statement emailed by her spokesman Pete Sanders, de Lesseps offered her sincere apologies to anyone she might have offended with her behavior.

"This was my first time in Palm Beach since my wedding and being there brought up long-buried emotions," she said.

She said she was committed to a "transformative and hopeful 2018."

De Lesseps married Tom D'Agostino Jr. in Palm Beach on New Year's Eve. The couple split earlier this year.

Messages left Sunday morning for a Palm Beach Police spokesman were not immediately returned.

Lorde scraps Israel concert amid boycott calls

JERUSALEM (AP)—Lorde on Sunday cancelled a performance in Israel scheduled for next summer after appeals by pro-Palestinian activists.

The New Zealand music star said in a statement that "the right decision at this time" was to cancel her June 2018 concert in Tel Aviv, which was announced earlier this month.

Her announcement followed calls by proponents of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement to cancel her performance over Israel's human rights record. Lorde joins artists including Roger Waters, Lauryn Hill and Elvis Costello in boycotting Israel over its treatment of the Palestinians.

Lorde said that after having "lots of discussions" about the matter, "I'm not too proud to admit I didn't make the right call on this one," referring to her initial decision to hold the concert.

Lorde's cancellation was welcomed by members of the BDS movement. The Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel posted a statement on Twitter thanking the artist for "heeding appeals from your fans against Israel's art-washing of its brutal oppression of Palestinians."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Life-size elf decoration turns heads, even loses his own

ROCKPORT, Mass. (AP)—A life-size elf mannequin on display in a Massachusetts yard has been turning heads—and occasionally losing his own. Actress Melissa McMeekin has been having a little fun by moving her 6-foot-tall elf doll to different locations outside her Rockport home. During the countdown to Christmas, Daryl the red-suited elf has appeared seated on a tree branch, riding a bicycle, lying on a hammock and tied up like a hostage. McMeekin tells the Gloucester Times her family has been getting a kick out of the double takes the moveable elf has elicited from passers-by. She says on one blustery day Daryl fell off his bike and his head landed a few feet away. McMeekin's acting credits include "The Fighter," ''American Hustle" and other films.

Maroon 5 manager Jordan Feldstein dies unexpectedly at 40

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The longtime manager of Maroon 5 and brother of actor Jonah Hill has died. Jordan Feldstein was 40 years old. A spokeswoman for the band confirmed Saturday that Feldstein died unexpectedly Friday. The Feldstein family said in a statement that Jordan Feldstein called 911 after experiencing shortness of breath Friday. He had gone into cardiac arrest by the time paramedics arrived and died a short time later. Feldstein was the founder and chief executive of Career Artist Management and had managed Maroon 5 since its inception 15 years ago. His company also counts Miguel, The B-52s, Elle King and Rick Springfield among its clients. Besides Hill, Feldstein is survived by his sister, parents and two children.

Husband's threat of divorce compels wife to lose weight

DEAR ABBY: I have been married for 18 years and have two wonderful kids, ages 14 and 12. Ten months ago, my husband said to me, "I told you I would divorce you if you ever got fat." I was shocked! Yes, I have gained some weight over the years, but at 5 feet 5 inches tall and 150 pounds, I was not exactly obese.

I was frightened by what he said, so I took off 25 pounds. He didn't appear to notice, so I asked him, "Now what do you think?" He said, "You have no muscle tone"!

Abby, nothing I do is good enough. I work part-time and take care of our kids and the house. I go out of my way to cook and bake interesting things for them. Any appreciation? His praise is, "Not bad."

Abby, what should I do?

BIGGEST LOSER IN NEW YORK

DEAR "LOSER": Before I answer your question, I should point out that the way some abusers maintain control is by withholding approval, love, money, etc.

According to the National Institutes of Health, a woman who is 5 feet 5 inches tall should weigh between 114 and 144 pounds to be considered a normal weight. For your husband to threaten you with divorce if you didn't lose weight was brutal. Nothing you do is good enough because keeping you insecure and always trying to gain his approval is how he maintains the upper hand in your marriage. Losing weight is not easy. You should have been praised for your success.

Since you asked what to do, I'll tell you: Take him at his word. Your husband may have said your muscle tone is flabby, but from where I sit, what's sagging is your self-esteem. Go to the gym. Get into a training program. Improve that muscle tone, and along with it your image of yourself. Then, once you have achieved your goal and feel better about yourself, decide whether you want to remain married to a man who has such poor "muscle tone" between the ears.

DEAR ABBY: I am a 63-year-old widow. I have not been with a man since my husband died 10 years ago. I am now dating a 31- year-old man. I am deeply in love with him. He says he's in love with me, too, but his family says he doesn't know what love is. He was previously in a four-year relationship with someone his own age.

Am I crazy for dating a man who is 31? He's everything I have always wanted, and what I would consider the perfect man for me. He claims his only problem with dating me is that I will probably pass away in 20 years, and he will be alone and devastated. My concern is I feel I am preventing him from future children and a possible wife his own age. He says he doesn't want kids, but I'm not so sure. Please tell me what to do. I have never been in this situation before.

HELP, PLEASE, IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR HELP, PLEASE: As relationships evolve, couples learn more about each other. You didn't mention how long you and this man have been involved with each other, but if it has been less than a year, you would be wise to slow things down. It would be in your interest to know why his family thinks he doesn't know what love is. The answer to that question could be enlightening.

As to your not being certain that he doesn't want to be a father, in spite of the fact that he says he doesn't, not everyone wants children. If you aren't sure that everything he's telling you is the truth, I suggest you wait a few more innings before swinging for a home run.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

THIS WILL BE THE STRONGEST SNOW FORT EVER MADE!
KEEP PACKING ON SNOW. THIS WILL BE INDESTRUCTIBLE.
WE'LL POUR WATER ON IT, SO IT FREEZES OVERNIGHT. THAT WAY OUR FORT WILL BE HERE UNTIL JULY!
WHERE'S THAT KID?!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

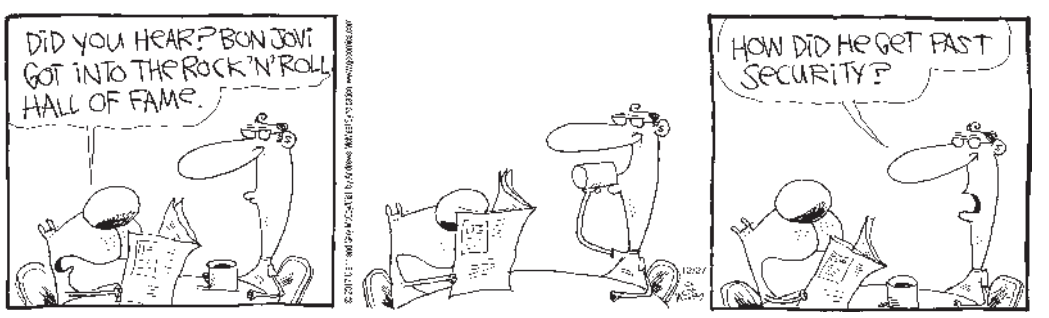
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

DAD AND CLAYTON ARE GOING TO SEE "STAR WARS" AGAIN THIS AFTERNOON.
OH, GOOD.
COULD I... WOULD IT BE OKAY IF I WENT WITH THEM?
REALLY? AND SKIP OUR ANNUAL POST-CHRISTMAS SALE SHOPPING DAY?
I KNOW, I KNOW. I BLAME IT ON THE FORCE.
HEAR YOU. I DO. TOMORROW, GO SHOPPING WE SHALL.
12-27

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Eden evictee
5 300, to Cato
8 Release money
12 Office note
13 Foot rub response
14 Within (Pref.)
15 Fleet of ships
17 Swelled heads
18 Stephen King novel
19 Dense
21 Gratuity
22 Arias for one
23 Stolen
26 Away from NNE
28 Boob tube, to a Brit
31 Love god
33 Gut-punch reaction
35 Lost traction
36 Singer Lena
38 Inventor Whitney
40 TV spots
41 Chinese secret society
43 "Suits" network
45 Eccentric
47 Hire
51 Sentry's cry
52 Senora's scarf
54 Cruise stop
55 Rainbow shape
56 Close
57 Peruse
58 Hobbyist's abbr.
59 Jewels

DOWN

1 Like most car radios
2 Sandwich shop
3 Old Testament book
4 Sacred song
5 Trinidad music
6 Nev. neighbor
7 Utter disorder
8 Ladybugs, e.g.
9 One of the Leeward Islands
10 Altar vows
11 Misplace
16 Eye part
20 Automaton, for short
23 Sneaky laugh
24 Acapulco gold
25 Mexican pancake
27 Travail
29 Cover
30 QB's stats
32 Expressed derision
34 Ease of speaking, as a language
37 Conclusion
39 "— It Romantic?"
42 Flip out
44 Getting on
45 Spinning sound
46 Lighten
48 Sheltered
49 Glitz partner
50 Canal zones?
53 "Entourage" agent

Solution time: 23 mins.

V	A	M	P		R	E	F		R	I	P	E
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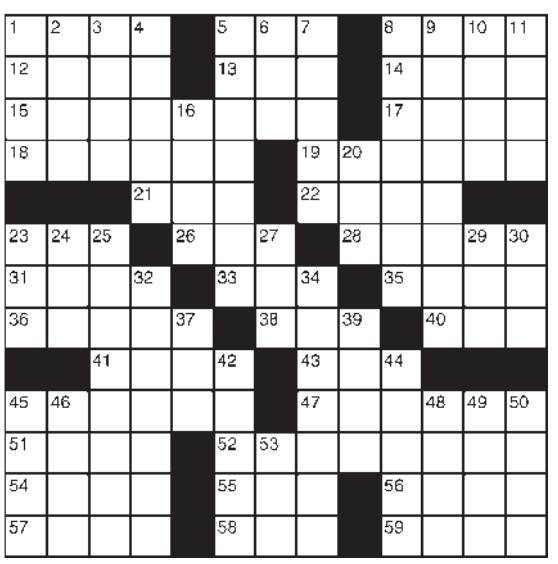
O	P	F	I		S	H	Y		R	J	S	T

Yesterday's answer 12-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Hayley Williams, 29; Gerard Depardieu, 69; Cokie Roberts, 74; John Amos, 78.

Happy Birthday: Reflection and hard work will be necessary this year. Consider what you have done in the past and how you can use your experience and know-how to avoid making the same mistakes over and over again. Don't get down when all you need to do is hone your skills and make them work more efficiently. Don't complain or give in to outside interference. Your numbers are 2, 14, 18, 23, 35, 39, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Anything related to work should be handled carefully. Take care of your responsibilities without complaint. An emotional reaction will make you look bad and lead to an impulsive move. Do your best to get along with others. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Be direct if you have a problem. Being honest and asking questions are the best ways to get to the bottom of any situation that leaves you feeling uncertain. Peace and love will help resolve issues, but complaining won't. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Stick to what you know and steer clear of anyone who shows inconsistency or unpredictable tendencies. Stay grounded and stick to whatever commitments you have made. Use common sense and offer honest answers. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* A shopping trip will lead to a bargain that will improve your domestic environment. Make romance a priority and make plans to enjoy being with the people who make you happy. Personal improvements are featured. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Make a change at work or to your status and reputation. Consider what you enjoy doing most and look for ways to use your skills, experience or knowledge to help you head in a direction that excites you. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Consider the adjustments you can make to the way you live. Consider how you can apply the knowledge you have gained in the past to future prospects. A change of location or updating your skills will help you move forward. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Refuse to let individuals who don't share your opinion get a rise out of you. Nurture the relationships that are most important to you. The quality of your interactions with others will depend on your frame of mind. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Don't venture too far from home. It's important to focus inward and reflect on the plans and promises you've made. Do whatever it takes to stabilize your relationships with those you care about before moving forward. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* A bargain is not worth it if you have to incur debt. Changes can be made that are cost-efficient and will allow you to save rather than spend. Common sense and the ability to say "no" will be in your best interest. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Emotions will swell up when dealing with friends or relatives who know how to get a rise out of you. Stop and think before you take the bait and you'll come up with a much better way to handle such encounters. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Don't leave anything to chance. Getting your personal papers and documentation in order will be necessary before the year comes to a close. Don't let anyone take you for granted. Look for a way to reach your professional goals. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Offer suggestions, but don't take over. You'll be blamed for interfering if you are too eager to tell others what to do. Misunderstandings are apparent. Personal growth should be your focus, not trying to change others. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are productive, imaginative and opportunistic. You are innovative and changeable.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5	2		6				
9			5	3				
			8	1		5		
			7	9		3		
		1		4	8	9	6	
	9					4		
2						6		
5						1		
7	8	6	9			2		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

7	4	8	6	2	9	1	3	5
6	3	2	7	5	1	9	4	8
9	1	5	8	3	4	2	7	6
3	2	1	5	8	7	4	6	9
5	9	7	1	4	6	8	2	3
4	8	6	2	9	3	5	1	7
1	6	4	9	7	8	3	5	2
2	7	9	3	1	5	6	8	4
8	5	3	4	6	2	7	9	1

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

CHOO CHOO TRAINS Solution: 9 letters

K	B	M	E	L	T	S	I	H	W	P	L	A	Y	A
C	R	U	G	O	R	N	A	T	E	R	I	W	A	S
U	A	E	A	L	R	E	V	I	R	D	N	I	W	N
B	K	S	G	D	L	O	C	A	L	E	S	N	L	I
S	I	U	G	N	E	U	U	L	A	F	L	E	I	A
S	N	M	A	D	E	T	F	T	Z	O	O	R	A	H
O	G	T	B	Ⓣ	O	S	N	R	E	O	R	D	R	C
R	F	R	Ⓡ	U	R	T	S	I	O	R	T	L	E	A
C	B	Ⓐ	R	I	R	A	T	A	A	L	N	I	L	R
A	Ⓜ	I	I	A	D	O	I	O	P	P	O	H	A	R
R	S	N	C	R	Y	E	E	L	X	A	C	C	X	I
T	O	K	R	O	A	D	M	A	S	T	E	R	I	A
O	S	T	E	A	M	A	R	D	R	I	V	I	N	G
O	E	V	I	T	O	M	O	C	O	L	O	N	G	E
N	O	I	T	A	T	R	O	P	S	N	A	R	T	D

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Axle, Baggage, Braking, Carriage, Cartoon, Chains, Children, Colorful, Controls, Crossbuck, Dotto, Driver, Driving, Fair, Local, Locomotive, Long, Museum, Ornate, Painted, Passenger, Play, Rails, Railway, Relaxing, Ride, Roadmaster, Rooted, Route, Steam, Tourist, Toy, Tracks, Train, Tram, Transportation, Whistle, Wind, Wire, Zoo

Yesterday's Answer: Farewell Tour

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(1) BHS Technician-I (Saipan)
(1) ARFF General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
(1) Custodial/Maintenance-I (Rota)
(1) CADD Operator (Saipan)
(1) IT Specialist (Saipan)
(1) Equipment Operator-I (Saipan)
(3) General Maintenance-I (Saipan)
(1) Custodial-I (Saipan)
(1) Procurement Clerk (Saipan)
(1) General Maintenance-II (Rota-Seaport)
(1) Staff Attorney (Saipan)

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- **Saipan: CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor, Arrival Terminal, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport;**
- **Tinian: CPA Administration Office, West Tinian International Airport;**
- **Rota: CPA Administration Office, Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport (Rota).**

A printable copy of the application and position descriptions may also be downloaded at www.cpa.gov.mp.

The Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original official recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. The vacancies may require a written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, a 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. **All applications and required documents must be submitted to either one of the CPA Administration Offices on Saipan, Tinian or Rota (as shown above) no later than 5:00 p.m. ChST on Friday, December 29, 2017.**

For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or evelyn.sablan@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670) 237-6590 or 6588.

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Eagles clinch No. 1 seed with win over Raiders

AP
Philadelphia Eagles' Jay Ajayi (36) is tackled by Oakland Raiders' NaVorro Bowman (53) and Dexter McDonald (23) as Zach Ertz (86) defends during the first half of an NFL football game, Monday, Dec. 25, 2017, in Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The road to the Super Bowl in the NFC goes through Philadelphia.

Jake Elliott kicked a 48-yard field goal with 22 seconds left, and the Eagles clinched the No. 1 seed for the NFC playoffs with a sloppy 19-10 victory over the Oakland Raiders on Monday night.

The Eagles (13-2) went to the Super Bowl and lost 24-21 to New England the last time they had home-field advantage following the 2004 season.

They'll need the edge after a second straight poor performance. The defense struggled in a 34-29 win at the Giants last week. The offense was awful against the Raiders.

"We played great team ball," cornerback Patrick Robinson said. "The offense didn't play as well as they have been, the defense had to step up."

Ronald Darby intercepted Derek Carr's pass and ran it back 52 yards with 54 seconds left, but was ruled down by contact at the spot of the pick. Nick Foles then completed four straight passes for 21 yards. After an incomplete pass, Elliott nailed his kick right down the middle.

"We have to pick up for each other," Darby said.

Derek Barnett returned a fumble 23 yards for a touchdown after picking up a lateral on Oakland's final play from scrimmage.

Coming off a 12-4 season, the Raiders (6-9) were a popular pick to challenge the Patriots for the AFC title. But they were eliminated from the playoff chase on Sunday.

Still, playing for pride, Oakland nearly spoiled Philadelphia's Christmas.

"Defensive battle, hard-fought game, certainly had our chances," Raiders coach Jack Del Rio said. "We ran it well, struggled throwing it. Defense played extremely well."

Making his second start since MVP candidate Carson Wentz tore his left ACL, Foles had a tough time on a windy night. He was 19 of 38 for 163 yards with one TD and one interception. He had four TD passes and no picks against New York.

"I didn't play good enough," Foles said. "I have to play cleaner, (need) pinpoint accuracy and good decisions on third downs."

Carr was even worse. He was 15 of 29 for 140 yards, one TD and two interceptions.

"Anytime you give the ball to the other team, it hurts," Carr said. "We got to help (the defense) out."

Carr threw a 63-yard TD pass to Amari Cooper to tie it at 7 early in the second quarter. Cooper was wide open after cornerback Jalen Mills tried to jump the route.

Giorgio Tavecchio kicked a 25-yard field goal on the opening drive of the third quarter to give the Raiders a 10-7 lead.

The teams traded turnovers on three straight possessions, starting with Robinson intercepting Carr and returning it to Oakland's 44.

Eagles left guard Chance Warmack then caused Jay Ajayi to fumble when he tried to push the pile and hit his teammate. The Raiders recovered at their 30, but gave it back on the next play when Marshawn Lynch fumbled at the same spot.

Philadelphia couldn't do much with excellent field position and settled for Elliott's tying 35-yard field goal.

After Tavecchio missed a 48-yard field goal with 7:58 remaining, Foles threw a pass that bounced off Pro Bowl tight end Zach Ertz's hands and was intercepted by Reggie Nelson at the Eagles 37.

But Philadelphia quickly got the ball back when Malcolm Jenkins stripped Jalen Richard and recovered it at the Eagles 16. The offense went three-and-out.

Oakland's first drive ended with Carr throwing the ball away on fourth-and-2 from Philadelphia's 42.

The Eagles scored on the ensuing possession when Foles tossed a 17-yard TD pass to Ajayi for a 7-0 lead. Corey Clement ran 2 yards on fourth-and-1 to extend the drive.

Foles had gone 170 passes without throwing a pick. It was the longest active streak in the NFL.

Steelers 34, Texans 5

Ben Roethlisberger told his teammates they didn't need to make up for Antonio Brown's absence. He just wanted everyone to do what they could to help out, figuring that would be enough.

It certainly was.

"I know everyone was thinking about A.B. not being out there and trying to fill those shoes, but you can't fill those shoes," Roethlisberger said. "I just tried to tell them: `Don't try to fill them, just try to be the best you can be."

Roethlisberger threw for 226 yards and two touchdowns in the first game since Brown injured his calf, and the Steelers clinched a first-round playoff bye with a 34-6 win over the Texans. Roethlisberger threw passes to six players as Pittsburgh (12-3) romped over the lowly Texans (4-11) despite missing the NFL's leading receiver.

"It just kind of shows how many weapons we actually have in our offense ... everybody played well," Le'Veon Bell said. "Ben made the plays when he needed to. I made some plays on third down when I needed to. It was literally a total team effort."

The Steelers led 20-0 at halftime after taking advantage of two turnovers by the Texans. Bell added a 10-yard TD run late in the third quarter and rookie JuJu Smith-Schuster made it 34-6 with an 18-yard touchdown grab in the fourth.

Bell finished with 14 carries for 69 yards and Smith-Schuster had six receptions for 75 yards.

"Significant day for us," Pittsburgh coach Mike Tomlin said. "Our last regular-season road game, finishing 7-1, getting our 12th win, securing a ticket to the second round. All very positive things, but it's kind of the culmination of being singularly focused on the next opportunity."

T.J. Yates was 7 of 16 for 83 yards and a touchdown for the Texans, who lost their fifth straight game and for the eighth time in nine games.

"It's brutal," coach Bill O'Brien said of Houston's skid. "It's been a tough year."

Yates made his second straight start since Tom Savage sustained a concussion. Yates left the game briefly on Monday to be evaluated for a concussion, and his replacement, Taylor Heinicke, sustained a concussion on his only full possession.

Roethlisberger was replaced by backup Landry Jones with about six minutes remaining and the game well in hand.

The Steelers hurried and harassed Yates all day with Mike Hilton leading the way with three sacks and three quarterback hits, Cameron Heyward adding two and forcing a fumble. Hilton became the first cornerback with three sacks in a game since sacks became an official statistic in 1982.

The Texans couldn't do much right on a day their home stadium was overtaken by vocal Steelers fans waving their Terrible Towels. One of the few highlights came on an acrobatic 3-yard touchdown reception by DeAndre Hopkins in the fourth quarter. Hopkins deflected the ball with his right hand, reeled it in with his left and got both feet down before falling out of bounds for his NFL-best and franchise-record 13th touchdown reception.

Hopkins may have been the only one who wasn't impressed with the grab.

"I'm mad I didn't catch it the first time," he said. "Like me, who I am, I was supposed to catch that one the first time with my right hand."

The Steelers took a 10-0 lead when Roethlisberger connected with Justin Hunter on a 5-yard touchdown pass in the first quarter.

Alfred Blue had a 48-yard run on the first play of the second quarter to get the Texans to the Pittsburgh 18-yard line. The Texans got to the 1 on second down later in that drive, but couldn't do anything on the next two plays before Yates was intercepted in the end zone.

Bucs QB Winston joins Dan Marino in elite company

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Few have ever compared Jameis Winston to Dan Marino—until now.

Winston, who turns 24 in January, has tied the Miami Dolphins legend for the most NFL touchdown passes before his 24th birthday with 68, according to Elias Sports Bureau. He tied the mark with an 18-yard pass to former college teammate Bobo Wilson, but Tampa Bay lost 22-19 .

"It doesn't really matter if you have those games when you lose," said Winston, who was 21-for-27 for 367 yards and a touchdown, but three fumbles against Carolina. "I have to say, a bunch of unfortunate things just happen to us. We just have to get better."

Through three seasons, Winston has 41 interceptions with one game to play. Marino had 43 picks in his first three seasons.

Still, Bucs coach Dirk Koetter called Winston a "warrior."

Wilson joined Florida State in 2013 with Winston, but Winston left after two seasons. Four of Wilson's eight college touchdown catches came from Winston. The teammates took different roads to Tampa, Winston as a top pick and Wilson as an undrafted free agent.

"In college, he was always good," Wilson said of Winston. "He's still young and has lots to learn, like myself, and we'll keep getting better."

Carolina's offense had been rolling coming into the weekend but stumbled against Tampa Bay—which could be some cause from concern.

Carolina had just 78 yards yards at halftime—the fewest in any first half since Cam Newton became Panthers quarterback in 2011. Carolina ran 21 plays for an average gain of 3.7 yards and was stopped on four of its five third down plays.

Durant delivers on both ends, Warriors beat Cavs

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—LeBron James drove to the basket in the waning seconds and Kevin Durant swatted away any chance Cleveland had at a Christmas Day comeback.

Durant pumped his fist again and again, emphatically shook his head and pounded his chest in delight. It looked a lot like the dominant Durant from the NBA Finals six months ago.

Klay Thompson hit a go-ahead 3-pointer with 1:33 left, Durant delivered on both ends of the floor, and the Golden State Warriors beat the Cavaliers 99-92 on Monday in a festive holiday rematch of the past three Finals.

"There's just so much joy in the arena today because it's Christmas and we all feed off of that," Durant said.

Durant's block against a driving James with 24.5 seconds left went out of bounds off James, who said he thought he was fouled on the play. Durant finished with 25 points, seven rebounds and five blocked shots.

"He's one of the leaders in shot blocks a game and obviously he had five tonight, so he's been doing a heck of a job of first of all taking the individual matchup and protecting the rim, too," James said.

Kevin Love had 31 points and a season-best 18 rebounds, while James contributed 20 points, six rebounds and six assists in a rivalry missing one key piece: Warriors star Stephen Curry, who missed his eighth straight game with a sprained right ankle.

Thompson scored 24 points and Draymond Green had a triple-double with 12 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists. It was Golden State's 12th win in 13 games after its 11-game winning streak was snapped by Denver on Saturday night.

Warriors rookie Jordan Bell traveled with 2:13 left and James tied it. Bell made up for that mistake with a key offensive rebound and pass to Thompson for his fourth 3.

James' 3-pointer with 10:39 left pulled Cleveland within one, but Green answered with a 3 and Andre Iguodala scored two of his nine points the next time down. In another key sequence, Durant blocked Tristan Thompson's shot with 6:23 to go and dunked moments later.

No surprise, the up-tempo, running rivals provided high entertainment once again. The Warriors last June captured a second championship in three years against James and the Cavaliers.

"I forgot all about it," Cavs coach Tyronn Lue said with a chuckle.

The teams will see each other again soon, playing Jan. 15 in Cleveland.

KD requested James for his defensive assignment, to which he explained simply, "I just like guarding my position.

The Cavs, having won six of seven and playing for the first time since Thursday, had their run of scoring at least 100 points end at 26 games.

The Warriors were at nearly full strength again aside from Curry, who could return this week once he goes through some scrimmages at practice.

Center Zaza Pachulia was available but didn't play after sitting out seven consecutive games, while Shaun Livingston came back after missing four games with a sore right knee.

Bell—who addressed the sellout crowd at midcourt moments before tipoff—started at center and had eight points and six rebounds.

The Cavs' 31.8-percent shooting was the lowest by a Warriors opponent in nearly four years, since Charlotte shot 31.2 percent from the field on Feb. 4, 2014.

"We just didn't make shots," Lue said.

Sure, this one felt a little strange without Curry or Kyrie Irving, now in Boston.

"Golden State-Cavaliers, that's a big game, no matter who's playing, who's out," Lue said.

"It will be weird, without Steph, without Ky, especially the battles we've had over the last three years. So both teams look different."

Warriors coach Steve Kerr knows just the uniforms are enough to get everybody going—and this marked the third straight Christmas matchup between the franchises, alternating home floors based on who won the title.

AP

Golden State Warriors forward Kevin Durant (35) shoots over Cleveland Cavaliers guard Jose Calderon (81) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Oakland, Calif., Monday, Dec. 25, 2017. The Warriors won, 99-92.

Timberwolves 121, Lakers 104

In Los Angeles, Jimmy Butler scored 23 points, Karl-Anthony Towns had 21 points and 10 rebounds and the Minnesota Timberwolves beat the Los Angeles Lakers for their first-ever Christmas Day victory.

Former Southern California standout Taj Gibson had 23 points and nine rebounds for the Timberwolves, who have won four straight. Jamal Crawford added 19 points off the bench.

Kyle Kuzma scored 31 points for the Lakers, who have lost three in a row and six of seven. Jordan Clarkson had 17 points, seven assists and six rebounds, and Julius Randle had 16 points and seven rebounds.

Minnesota pulled away when Towns and Crawford combined to score 12 straight points after Randle put Los Angeles up 84-83 with 11:14 to play. The Lakers cut the deficit to 105-99 with 4:30 remaining, but Gibson knocked down consecutive baskets to restore a double-digit lead.

Kuzma scored 10 of the Lakers' first 14 points.

Los Angeles was without Brandon Ingram and Lonzo Ball. Ball sprained his left shoulder against Portland on Saturday, and Ingram missed his second straight game with quad injuries.

The Timberwolves led by 10 with 7:42 left in the second quarter, but the Lakers closed the half on a 22-13 run. Kuzma hit a 3 with 1:07 left to give Los Angeles its first lead before Butler hit a spinning layup to put Minnesota in front 53-52 at the break.

Thunder 112, Rockets 107

In Oklahoma City, Russell Westbrook had 31 points and 11 assists to help Oklahoma City to its fifth straight victory.

Paul George scored 24 points and Carmelo Anthony added 20 for the Thunder, who shot 54.4 percent from the field.

James Harden led the Rockets with 29 points, but he made just 7 of 18 field goals. The league's leading scorer was coming off back-to-back 51-point games.

Trevor Ariza and Eric Gordon each scored 20 points and Clint Capela added 19 points and 10 rebounds for Houston, which lost its third straight.

Houston point guard Chris Paul was sidelined by a groin strain. The Rockets are 15-1 when he plays and 10-6 when he sits out.

Wizards 111, Celtics 103

In Boston, Bradley Beal scored 25 points, John Wall had 21 points and 14 assists, and Washington beat Boston in the Celtics' first Christmas Day home game in franchise history.

Otto Porter Jr. added 20 points and Kelly Oubre Jr. finished with 16, helping Washington take the first meeting between the teams since Boston's Game 7 victory at home in the second round of the playoffs last spring.

Boston lost for the third time in four games. Kyrie Irving and Jayson Tatum each scored 20 points for the Celtics, and Terry Rozier had 16.

Boston opened a 95-90 lead on Irving's 3-pointer with 6:18 left, but the Wizards responded with a 12-0 run.

76ers 105, Knicks 98

In New York, Joel Embiid had 25 points and 16 rebounds, JJ Redick scored 24 points, and Philadelphia snapped a five-game losing streak.

Embiid and Redick were cleared to play after going through pregame warmups, and their presence gave the 76ers just enough to win their first Christmas Day appearance since 2001.

Embiid, who has been battling a bad back, powered through a big-man duel with Enes Kanter, who had a season-high 31 points and a career-best 22 rebounds.

Redick, who missed the last game with right hamstring tightness, helped the 76ers pull away from an 89-all tie midway through the fourth quarter.

Kristaps Porzingis scored 22 points for the Knicks, who fell to 22-30 on Christmas with their fifth straight loss on the holiday.

Ohtani bids farewell to Japan fans ahead of Angels adventure

SAPPORO, Japan (AP)—Los Angeles Angels-bound Shohei Ohtani bid farewell to fans of his former Japanese club on Monday as he sets off to join his new Major League Baseball team.

The star pitcher and hitter wore an Angels jersey to his news conference. He opened with an introduction in English, saying: "Long time, no see. I'm Shohei Ohtani. Welcome to my press conference. Please enjoy." The Sapporo Dome crowd erupted in laughter and applause.

For five seasons, Ohtani called Sapporo home, playing for the Nippon Ham Fighters. He intends to be a starting pitcher and everyday hitter with the Angels.

Ohtani, the reigning Pacific League MVP, threw one final ceremonial pitch from the Sapporo Dome mound.

He spurned other major league offers to join two-time MVP Mike Trout and slugger Albert Pujols. The Angels are coming off their second consecutive losing season and haven't won a playoff game since 2009.

Ohtani was 3-2 with a 3.20 ERA while slowed by thigh and ankle injuries. But those numbers don't indicate the potential for a pitcher whose fastball has topped 100 mph.

Scouts are more divided on Ohtani's ability to consistently hit big-league pitching. He hit .332 in 65 games with eight homers and 31 RBI last season, occasionally unleashing the tape-measure blasts that captivated prospective teams.

In 2016, Ohtani hit .322 with 22 home runs and 67 RBI in 104 games. He also was 10-4 with a 1.86 ERA.

Ohtani will attempt to chart a rare career path, the majors' first regular two-way player in decades. He has drawn numerous, if unfair, comparisons to Babe Ruth, who excelled as a hitter and a pitcher early in his Hall of Fame career.

The Angels plan to use Ohtani as a hitter and a pitcher, and the 23-year-old player said Monday he is confident he can succeed in both in a more challenging environment.

Woods decides to be his own swing coach

DALLAS (AP)—Tiger Woods is embarking on his latest comeback without a swing coach.

Woods said Friday on Twitter that since fusion surgery on his lower back in April, he has been relearning his body and his golf swing by relying on feel and the previous three years of work with Dallas-based Chris Como.

"For now, I think it's best for me to continue to do this on my own," Woods said. "I'm grateful to Chris Como for his past work, and I have nothing but respect for him."

Como was not in the Bahamas when Woods returned following his fourth back surgery. In his first competition in 10 months, Woods had plenty of speed and power in his swing, shot three rounds in the 60s at the Hero World Challenge and tied for ninth against an 18-man field, 10 shots behind Rickie Fowler.

More important than his score was his form: Woods looked strong and fit with his swing and his posture all through the week.

He has not said where he will play first in 2018.

Unlike the previous three coaches employed by Woods—Butch Harmon, Hank Haney and Sean Foley -- Como was not as steady a presence in public even when Woods played an 11-event schedule in 2015.

Notah Begay, who has known Woods since they played together at Stanford, introduced him to Como in the summer of 2014. Woods hired him as a consultant late that year as he talked about a "new old swing" he would try to employ.

Como said in a text message that Woods' "electrifying play" in the Bahamas was the byproduct of "a lot of hard work over the last few years while fighting through injury and pain," and he felt there was plenty of enthusiasm for next year.

"When our professional relationship began, I was asked to help Tiger utilize his own instincts and feel while playing pain free," Como said. "I think we've accomplished that and I'm proud of the results. Tiger is ready to have an incredible run in his career. I'm eager to watch what will be one of the most exciting sports comebacks of all time."

Meanwhile, the Puerto Rico Open won't be played next year because of the damage from Hurricane Maria. It will be replaced by an unofficial PGA Tour event for players, other athletes and celebrities to help with recovery work.

The PGA Tour and the Puerto Rico Tourism Company said the Puerto Rico Open will return as a 72-hole, official tournament in 2019 and 2020.

AP

In this Dec. 3, 2017, file photo, Tiger Woods tees off on the third hole during the final round of the Hero World Challenge golf tournament at Albany Golf Club in Nassau, Bahamas. Woods is embarking on his latest comeback without a swing coach, saying he has worked hard to relearn his body and the golf swing.

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan made the announcement Thursday, saying he hopes the special event in March will help the island rebuild and celebrate Puerto Rico as a golf and travel destination. Tournament organizers hope to raise $500,000.

The event will be held at TPC Dorado Beach.

The Puerto Rico Open, held opposite a World Golf Championship in March, has been part of the tour schedule for 10 years and has raised $690,000 for charity groups working with children and health issues.

D.A. Points won this year's tournament.

NMA

From Page 28

with the "Best Christmas Spirit Attire" and "Best Support Vehicle."

The 36th Annual Christmas Island Relay is just one of the many activities and events that NMA hosts in its continued efforts to promote national physical fitness, health and wellness and fight obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and many other medical conditions that plague the people of the CNMI. NMA will host this event in the spirit of good tidings and goodwill with a hearty breakfast as a way to reach out and thank the many people who have participated in the association's competitions. ***(Saipan Tribune).***

FIESTA

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bune earned its first win in three games after crushing the Lower Base Warriors in the last match, 63-47.

Saipan Tribune spread the wealth and got its offensive game going in the second half for a 16-point winning margin.

Djay Ong scored 12 points, while Hark Galarion and Deether Edralin also finished in twin digits with 10 apiece. The seven other players who suited up for *Saipan Tribune* also hit the board.

In the first match, veteran Elmer Esdrelon had to step up in their game against Kanoa after giving way to his teammates in their first two victories. He fired a team-high 24 points, 15 of them came in the second half, which started with Fiesta behind, 31-37.

Esdrelon hit baskets in succession in the second half and drew help from Lerio Pagarao and Arjay Nonato to survive the 32-point explosion of Kanoa's Douglas Schmidt. After missing his team's first two games as he was in Vanuatu and represented the CNMI in the Pacific Mini Games, Schmidt announced his return to the league by scoring 19 points in the first half and putting Kanoa on the driver's seat.

Schmidt kept going, but failed to get support from his teammates, while Esdrelon flashed his vintage form and was backed up by Pagarao and Nonato to spoil the former's season debut.

In the second game, POI was in control of its match against Shirley's right from the get-go to keep its record clean and join Fiesta on top of the team standings.

Ferdie Arago led POI anew with his 20 points, while five of his teammates combined for at least 7 points each.

First Game

Fiesta 68 — Esdrelon 24, Pagarao 21, Nonato 10, Arreza 10, Sedillo 3.

Kanoa 65 — Schmidt 32, Pablo 12, Lumauag 6, Francisco 6, Encarna 4, Bustillo 2, Joab 2.

Scoring by halves: 31-37, 68-65.

Second Game

POI 68 — Arago 20, Santos 9, Tenepere 8, Kaipat 7, Bait 7, Nakashima 7, Paran 3, Yu 2, Pascual 2, Kim 2.

Shirley's 61 — Laxa 22, Jugos 16, Drilon 8, Gian 8, Alonzo 3, Catungal 2, Palma 2.

Scoring by halves: 37-28, 68-61.

Third Game

***Saipan Tribune* 63** — D. Ong 12, Galarion 10, Edralin 10, M. Ong 8, Angeles 4, Usi 4, Rabago 3, Calibo 2, J. Ong 2, Pagarao 2.

Warriors 47 — Fujihira 10, Riungel 9, Kenty 6, Echavez 5, Jinang 5, Alegre 4, Camu 4, Dowai 2, Lizama 2.

Scoring by halves: 21-18, 63-47.

TANHOLDINGS

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The ball then rolled down to Bucayo's right and fortunately for the Teen Ayuyus, Tenorio was there as he followed Calayag and managed to get the rebound and hit the first goal in the match. Pandemonium broke after Tenorio's conversion, as he was mobbed by some of his teammates at the sidelines, while others gave him high-fives.

However, the Teen Ayuyus' celebration turned out to be premature, as TanHoldings was able to force the deadlock, thanks to Martin's "miracle header," according to team captain Jershwin Angeles.

Martin's equalizer came off a cross pass from Ryan Relucio, who received a throw-in from Joshua De Leon. With Deleon doing the throw-in from the right sideline and Relucio and two other TanHoldings players closing in, the Teen Ayuyus' defense was concentrated on one side, leaving Martin a bit open for the header as even goalie Chris Aninzo was on the opposite corner post.

Martin's header hit the upper corner of the left post and dropped into the target to make up for his earlier failed free kick just a few minutes after Tenorio's shot, which nearly took the fight out of the eventual champions.

"Honestly after Sunjoon scored, I accepted to myself that we will lose unless there is a miracle. Some players looked down after Sunjoon's goal. But I kept reminding them that they still have time. Actually, there were just to two to three minutes left. When Martin scored, I shouted to my team 'this game is ours, it is a sign,'" Angeles said.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Brothers Lukas, left, and Martin Jambor, pose with the perpetual M-League trophy after delivering the goals in TanHoldings 2-1 Division A finals victory over the Teen Ayuyus last Saturday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

"Up to this moment, I still can't believe Martin's goal. I celebrated late because I was literally shocked because I wasn't expecting the header will be converted into a goal," he added.

Martin was also surprised with his header, which is the kind of shot he does not usually take.

"I started playing soccer when I was five and I think I only made five headers before. That one (against Teen Ayuyus) was a header in a difficult angle and I don't even know if I had a defender on me, as all my focus was to hit the ball," Martin said.

Though stunned with his goal, Martin said he was positive when he made the attempt.

"You've got to believe that it will go in. I know we're down and the time is ticking, but until the referee blows that whistle, you've got to believe you still have a chance," he said.

After Martin's goal sent the finals in overtime, Lukas made sure his brother's heroics won't go into waste. Lukas went for a cross about six yards from the box and the ball rolled into the deep right corner with Aninzo reaching hard for a save, but failling.

"It was a blessing and perfect timing that my brother was able to hit that goal after my header," Martin said.

Now ahead, it was TanHoldings' turn to put pressure on the Teen Ayuyus, who had four chances to score, but Bucayo this time held his ground on defense on two occasions to frustrate their opponents.

The TanHoldings goalie made his first defensive stop at the ninth minute of the extension when he pushed the ball back off a kick from Tenorio. The second one was another attempt from Tenorio with Bucayo catching the ball. Earlier after Lukas' go-ahead, Dai Podziewski went for the equalizer, but his header was way over the cross bar. Then for their last push, Tenorio let go off a cross, but the shot was wide to the right. A few seconds after Tenorio's miss, referee Rusellle Zapanta blew the final whistle, signaling TanHoldings to celebrate its title conquest.

"We had this vision of holding that (championship) trophy after the game and it took a lot of teamwork and each player playing their best to win it," Angeles said, adding that the Jambor siblings clearly made the difference in the closely fought finals.

"I let the Jambor brothers rest in the second half. I don't usually sub them out but, my thought was to let them rest and bring back their 100% energy when they return. We let the other team got tired first before bringing in the Jambor brothers again. Both goals were very important, Martin made the miracle equalizer and Lukas scored the winning goal," he said.

2017 PSS/NMIFA Fall U11 Interscholastic Soccer League Playoffs

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Mt. Carmel School's Markus Toves has possession and is tightly guarded by a Garapan Elementary School defender during their semis game in the boys division of the 2017 PSS/NMIFA Fall U11 Interscholastic Soccer League last week at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Koblerville Elementary School, left, and Mt. Carmel School players chase the ball during their semis game in the girls division.

Mt. Carmel School's Andrew Sablan, right, tries to break away from a Garapan Elementary School defender.

A Mt. Carmel School player, right, receives a pass from her teammate.

A Mt. Carmel School player kicks the ball.

Two Mt. Carmel School players and one from Koblerville Elementary School run after the ball.

Koblerville Elementary School and Mt. Carmel School players and coaches exchange high-fives after their match.

A Garapan Elementary School player, right, collides with a Mt. Carmel School defender as they battle for the ball.

Eagles clinch No. 1 seed with win over Raiders

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Durant delivers on both ends, Warriors beat Cavs

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TanHoldings tops M-League

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

TanHoldings Football Club nosed out the Teen Ayuyus, 2-1, in the thrilling finale in Division A of the M-League last Saturday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Martin Jambor made a game saver, while his brother Lukas drilled the go-ahead goal to hand TanHoldings the division crown and give the club a perfect record this season.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
TanHoldings Football Club's Martin Jambor, left, uses his body to protect the ball from the Teen Ayuyus' Dai Podziewski during the second half of their Division A title game in the M-League last Saturday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Martin's header three minutes into the injury time tied the match, while Lukas registered the game winner five minutes into the 15-minute overtime.

Earlier in the 86th minute, Sunjoon Tenorio had a great recovery and knocked the ball in to lift the Teen Ayuyus to a 1-0 advantage. Tenorio was at the right place at the right time after teammate Louie Calayag faltered on an attempt in the middle of the box. Calayag found a small opening on TanHoldings's defense and went for a kick, however, goalkeeper John Bucayo moved in and partially caught the ball before butterfingers had him losing the leather.

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
POI Aviaton's Ferdie Arago, rights, goes up for a fallaway jumper against *Saipan Tribune's* Ferdie De La Torre during the opening game in the TanHoldings caging early this month at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium. Both POI and *Saipan Tribune* won their games last Saturday.

Fiesta, POI share lead; *Saipan Tribune* gains first victory

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan and POI Aviation are still undefeated, while *Saipan Tribune* broke into the win column in the 2017 Tan Holdings Inter-Company Basketball League after last Saturday's triple-header at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Fiesta played in the curtain-raiser and outclassed Kanoa, 68-65, in their first faceoff since last season's finals for a 3-0 record in the six-team field. POI matched Fiesta's perfect mark following a 68-61 triumph over Shirley's Coffee Shop in the second game, while *Saipan Tri-*

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NMA holds Christmas Island Relay this Saturday

The Northern Marianas Athletics is proud to announce the staging of the 36th Annual Christmas Island Relay this Saturday.

The 13.7-mile race from Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio to the Last Command Post in Marpi is open to running enthusiasts, who may compete in the solo or team event in open and youth divisions. Last year, Agape Christian School swept the team events with ACS 1 winning the open division race after clocking in at 1:27:42 and ACS 3 topping the youth category with a time of 1:34:25.

Interested teams must have five members to compete in this weekend's race. Each squad racing in the open mixed division should have a runner who is 16 years old or younger, a female, or 40 years old or older. Each member will alternately run one mile of the course and entry fees are $5 per runner or $25 per team.

In the youth mixed division (U16 age group), a team should have at least one female or U12 runner. The same registration fees apply, while for solo runners, entry fees are $10.

Meanwhile, NMA will be awarding prizes to the team

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Agape Christian School 1 runners celebrate their first place finish during last year's 35th Annual Christmas Island Relay at the Last Command Post.